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A SHORT HISTORY
OF
WESTERN CIVILISATION

by

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PREFACE

It may be said that citizenship is the end of education, and that knowledge of history is the indispensable basis of citizenship. That the social order of the present day is the product of a very long process of development has come to be a truism. If the citizen is to appreciate fully the world in which he lives, he must be prepared to trace back, if necessary, to remote ages, the sources of the institutions and ideas which exist in the twentieth century.

The purpose of this little book is to trace the origin and growth, in its essential features, of that European civilisation which constitutes the atmosphere, intellectual and moral, in which the citizen of to-day has to live his life. The author has sought to give an impression of the unity of history, and of the growth of humanity, and to display the processes by which civilisation has been fashioned. It is hoped that the reader will obtain some conception of the upward trend of man's development from the earliest *stone age* to the present day; and, in particular, his increasing control over the forces of circumstance and over tradition. Past conditions, rather than events, have received attention. The standard of civilisation, the economic growth of communities, the development of governmental institutions and the religious beliefs of the masses have been selected as the truly significant factors in human history. It is from a study of the conditions under which men lived, and of the ideas which they formulated, that an informed

judgment on the deep questions of present-day citizenship may be acquired.

The selection of subjects for treatment has inevitably occasioned very great difficulties. Only the main channels of history could be presented. The modest scale of the book has necessitated drastic excisions, and the author is conscious of the omission of much that might be considered of vital significance in the development of western civilisation. He has endeavoured to give most prominence to the great facts of history which appear to throw most light on the world of to-day. Thus, the political and constitutional arrangements of the Greeks have been singled out for more detailed mention on account of the strong interest which naturally attaches to early experiments in democratic government. From ancient Athens the earnest student of democracy may perhaps discover in what direction lie the principal dangers, and how they may be removed. At the same time, some effort has been made to indicate the indebtedness of the settled society of the twentieth century to the art, literature and philosophy of the Greek world. Knowledge of the main facts connected with the evolution and maintenance of the Roman Empire may be considered to be an indispensable preliminary to study of the Middle Ages; and, further, perhaps, to afford the best introduction to problems of government over wide areas. The mediæval period is manifestly important, for several of the great institutions of modern civilisation must be traced back to mediæval origins. Prominence has been given to feudalism and the agricultural manor for several reasons. It was the discovery of agriculture which first produced the change to the settled territorial community. Then, the subject of the manorial system

can be approached, in the older countries of Europe, through local examples. The parish and the township, moreover, cannot be understood, without some appreciation of feudal conditions. The great work of the mediæval Church has been approached from the side of monasticism, and the subject of mediæval architecture has been associated therewith, because the developing ideas of mediæval man can be clearly traced in ecclesiastical buildings. Moreover, the cathedrals and monasteries are the noblest product of the corporate spirit of the Middle Ages.

In modern times it has been thought necessary to give some account of the religious movements of the sixteenth century, and of the growth of toleration. Sea power has been selected chiefly on account of the great part played by the navies of European Powers in determining the destinies of non-European territories; but also because strength at sea is peculiarly the product of the co-operation of all classes. It has seemed to be worth while to emphasise what sea power has been able to accomplish in the past, and the factors on which maritime strength may be said to depend. The development of commerce throws light on an important aspect of history—the internal consolidation of the territories of a state, and at the same time gives an impression of continuity and progress. The Industrial Revolution in the economic sphere, and the French Revolution in the political and social, afford an essential preparation to the study of recent history. No attempt has been made to deal with the events and personalities of the Revolution of 1789. The most important side has been taken to be the nature of the *ancien régime*, and the new spirit which made its continuance impossible. After the Congress of

Vienna, the forces of nationalism and democracy have been selected as those which shaped the course of nineteenth-century history. Finally, the problem of international relations and of the permanent pacification of Europe has been briefly stated. The attainment of a measure of unity and peace, in the organisation of the League of Nations, has appeared to the author to furnish an appropriate conclusion to a volume which, slight as it is, has endeavoured to trace the evolution, as the result of the common efforts of humanity, of a European civilisation.

The author's indebtedness to the chief authorities will be evident to many of his readers. He desires to make acknowledgment to the authorities mentioned in the "Select List of Books" (page 223), particularly to those marked with an asterisk. Full responsibility for the use he has made of facts is, of course, assumed by the author.

Finally, it may be noted that the first edition of this book, published in London in January 1926, was a very small one, it being mainly intended for private circulation.

A. F. H.

1927

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A SHORT HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

CHAPTER I

Primitive Man

HISTORY may be defined as the authenticated record of man's activities and achievements. It is not a complete or continuous record, for there are many gaps in our knowledge of the past. There is also present an element of uncertainty. The historian can record only what, in his judgment, is the closest possible approximation to the truth. He must be prepared at all times to weigh critically the value of the evidence before him. For the remoter ages, the data for investigation are extremely limited, and history may be little more than intelligent conjecture. The early progress of mankind is, for the most part, lost in the mists of antiquity.

Our knowledge of the past is, however, constantly increasing. It is only since the beginning of the nineteenth century that the remains of early man have been scientifically studied. More recently, history has become largely the domain of specialists working in restricted fields of research. Even within the province of the historical narrative, investigation tends to follow one only of a number of more or less distinct paths. The point of view of the constitutional historian is not the same as that of his economic confrère. Constitutional history records man's progress as a member of organised society, and his efforts to govern society. Economic history, on the other hand, seeks to explain how men

and women of the past made their living and the social consequences which followed the pursuit of wealth. Whilst these distinctions are an aid to study, it is important to remember that the facts of history are common to all enquirers. As Professor Maitland remarked: "History is a seamless garment".

In a restricted sense, history does not begin until some narrative or document is found to throw light on human achievement. History, it has been said, begins with the dawn of memory. The pre-documentary period, however, has its history, which, in general outline, can be interpreted with the help of auxiliary sciences. It is important that our record of human progress should be as complete as possible, and that all available traces of the remote past should be examined. Civilisation was already far advanced in some areas of the western world when literary records first illuminate the development of man. The general character of the earlier stages may be reconstructed from materials discovered by the archæologist and the anthropologist. The field of history has thus been immensely enlarged; and a vast series of "pre-historic" ages have, to some extent, been revealed.

The chronological limits of this record are inevitably a matter of conjecture. The starting-point of history based on literary records may indeed be determined with some degree of precision. In Mesopotamia and Egypt, owing to climatic conditions favouring the preservation of records, the commencement of the historic period may be carried back some six or seven thousand years. From extant written records, it is possible to trace the rough outline of the history of Babylonia so far back as the year 4200 B.C. On the other hand, we have

no narrative source of British history until approximately 325 B.C.

For the past which has no written records, it is necessary to rely upon the geologist and the archæologist. A vast antiquity has been established for the human race by reasoning from geological facts. The chronology of early man may be roughly determined from inferences based on examination of the strata in which human bones and the relics of human art have been found embedded. The presence of such relics alongside the fossil remains of long extinct mammals established the existence of man, in particular localities, at a very remote period. It is now agreed that man certainly existed in Europe, and was using tools of chipped flint, so early as the quaternary, or *drift*, period. The earliest tools of primitive man are thought to date from a period at least one hundred thousand years ago.

The expression "primitive history" is open to serious objection. In so far as it implies a rude form of society and culture, it is clearly inapplicable to the civilisations of the Mesopotamian peoples of the period of the earliest remains. Long before western Europe had emerged from the stone age, the civilisations of Babylon and Egypt had reached a wonderfully advanced stage. Early history is thus not necessarily "primitive".

The earliest known human, or semi-human, being of permanently erect stature is the Java ape-man.[1] The

[1] Some authorities ascribe the remains of Piltdown man, discovered in Sussex in 1912, to the same geological era, viz. the commencement of the glacial epoch, *c.* 500,000 B.C. The very gradual emergence of man and the difficulty of establishing a satisfactory hall mark of the human species makes it impossible to give even an approximate date for the commencement of human history. Thus, while the Java ape-man had certainly an erect

precursors of man had used their hands chiefly for climbing. The erect stature freed the hands for the work of tool-shaping; and human history opens with the first tangible relics of the work of man's hands.

European civilisation has been slowly developed from the culture of the *stone age*. The earliest tools, though occasionally made of bone, are mostly found to be of flint or other stone. Discovered in caves or river drifts among the debris of a remote geological age, these rudely fashioned tools have given the name *palæolithic*[1] to the period of their origin. The *palæolithic age* comprises the latter part of the so-called quaternary period, when the Continent of Europe came to assume its present form. The climate became markedly colder, and arctic conditions prevailed for periods of long duration, alternating with milder intervals when the ice receded northwards. Palæolithic man is presumed to have drifted across Europe in a westerly direction in the warm interval before the last great southward movement of the ice. There appear to have been four such movements; and the ice began to come south for the last time about 40,000 B.C. In Britain, palæolithic tools are found, with

posture, his skull was distinctly that of an ape. Piltdown man, on the other hand, though possessing a human skull, had an ape-like jaw. The discovery by Professor Dart (1924) of a creature which walked half-upright, and in which the characters of man and ape are apparently blended, seems to suggest that Africa was the cradle of the human race. Man of the modern type with a relatively large brain, powers of articulate speech, and ability to fashion tools probably emerged in Europe about 200,000 B.C.

1 The palæolithic period may be said to have opened *c.* 150,000 B.C., lasting in the West until *c.* 8000 B.C. The fourth glacial interval may be roughly dated 40,000–25,000 B.C. Archæologists have suggested a previous *eolithic* age, but eoliths are doubtfully the work of man.

the bones of the reindeer and mammoth, in strata earlier than the last glacial deposits.

Palæolithic man would normally support himself by the chase. In open grassy steppes, indeed, this would be impossible until the evolution of a rudimentary bow and arrow: and man, before he had learnt to domesticate the commoner animals, would presumably support himself on roots and fruit. The discovery of fire, the domestication of animals, and the practice of agriculture must be regarded as the truly significant events of remote antiquity. Following these inventions, more settled conditions of life would clearly become possible. Sooner or later, the hunter would settle down as a pastoralist. The nomadic stage of human history, if we follow what has been the commonly accepted view, gave place, with the domestication of animals, to the pastoral; whilst the later adoption of agriculture led to the settlement of man in village communities on a tribal basis.

This theory has recently undergone considerable modification. Much importance is now attached to climatic variations. We have seen that there could be no hunting stage in open grasslands, or indeed on desert plains where cover is unobtainable. Moreover, it is probable that in forest clearings, with a heavy rainfall, crops were grown by the womenfolk, as the result of some chance discovery, whilst the men were still engaged in the quest for animal food, armed with the spears and harpoons of the early stone age. At any rate, archæologists have brought to light village communities of the early neolithic period, the inhabitants of which were certainly agriculturists several centuries before they domesticated the horse and the cow. Clearly, the development must be regarded as most complex.

Practically all that is known with certainty of palæolithic man is that he was contemporary with a variety of mammals which have since become extinct; that, probably in self-defence, he fashioned weapons and implements of flint and bone; and that he was by no means devoid of artistic instincts. In the last period of the palæolithic age, engravings on antler, ivory or the stone walls of caves represent animals with such fidelity that it has been concluded by competent observers that some progress in the art of domestication must have been made. The discovery of fragments of charcoal in cave deposits further indicates that palæolithic man knew how to produce fire by friction, whilst bone awls and needles suggest the wearing of animal skins as clothing.

Though our positive knowledge of this period is so scanty, intelligent reconstruction of the general lines of development has been attempted with the aid of comparative anthropology. This study proceeds on the assumption that there are living at the present day savage peoples whose material and cultural civilisation is essentially that of primitive man. When scientific contact was first established, in the nineteenth century, with the aborigines of Australia and Tasmania, these peoples, owing to ages of complete isolation, had apparently made little or no progress on the achievements of palæolithic man. The flint-headed axe was the most serviceable tool. Even the long hatchets of palæolithic man in Europe were unknown to the Tasmanian aborigines; whilst in pictorial art, not one of the savage peoples of the present day can produce work comparable with the masterly engravings of the late quaternary period. On the other hand, the Australian natives, when first European travellers came into contact with them, had already

evolved a rudimentary civilisation. Though without pottery and domesticated animals, they had attained some skill in the fashioning of tools, the construction of stockades and rude huts, and in the pursuits of the chase. Social organisation took the primitive form of the hunting group or *pack*. Within the pack, the only permanent subdivision was made for purposes of inter-marriage. This is the so-called *totem group*. The *totem* is commonly a sacred animal or tree, to which the group is attached by regulations chiefly of a negative character. *Totemism* is still general among savage peoples. Very frequently, the law of *exogamy* prevails. A man must marry outside his own totem. Traces of this system have been detected in the primitive folklore of the Greeks and Romans. In consequence, there is some difficulty in accepting the view that society originated with the family, though the family may be regarded as one of the oldest of human institutions. The earliest phase in man's social history is probably represented by the hunting stage, when small bands of men co-operated to collect roots and hunt wild game. From this stage, it has been conjectured that society passed to some form of social organisation based on the patriarchal family. Certainly, respect for traditional custom, and concession of authority to elders appears to have been a general feature of primitive life.

Civilisation gradually developed by enlargement of knowledge. The domestication of animals profoundly modified the character of primitive society. Pastoral life demands orderly routine, and dispenses with the necessity for foraging excursions. Settlement in permanent homesteads was encouraged. Social relationships inevitably became more complicated. Cattle is primitive society's wealth; and sooner or later, the practice of

hiring out surplus stock by fortunate owners to poorer members of the group would come into existence. This is the origin of *landlordism* and *rent*. Man becomes dependent on man. With the adoption of agriculture, the *village community* made its appearance.

The early development of mankind must remain largely a matter for conjecture. The development was very far from being uniform over the whole of the European Continent. Study of savage peoples in modern times may assist the historian to trace the probable line of development of humanity in the remote ages, but there can be no approach to certainty. It is now thought that, though peoples may still exist whose cultural outlook is essentially that of the *neolithic* period, there are no parallels to the cultural horizon of palæolithic man.

The *neolithic age* is that which is intermediate between the palæolithic and bronze periods. It is considerably shorter than the former, and the tendency is to push back the beginnings of the bronze age almost to a point at which the neolithic would be squeezed out altogether. Bronze and copper tools have been found in strata of the same age as the beds in which the finely polished implements of neolithic culture have been discovered. In Britain, the traditional date for the commencement of the bronze age is 1800 B.C. In the Mediterranean lands, bronze was used at a much earlier date. For centuries, however, men were working in copper and tin, whilst the scarcity of these metals still made it necessary to resort to stone for articles of everyday use. Many so-called *neolithic* stone axes belong, in reality, to the period of the bronze age.

Between the palæolithic and neolithic periods there is a break in the history of man. The ice came south for the

last time, and finally receded, leaving big geological changes. Britain ceased to be a part of the continental shelf, the climate of Europe became more temperate, and several species of fauna altogether disappeared. The polished tools and pottery of neolithic man are found in strata widely separated from the beds wherein have been discovered the remains of palæolithic man.

Improved social organisation inevitably followed the progress in material civilisation which the advanced workmanship of the neolithic period so clearly indicates. Man of the old stone age had made the discovery of fire. His successors, almost everywhere, had domesticated the most useful of the animals. Implements for corn-grinding suggest the practice of rudimentary agriculture, pottery with moulded patterns produced by impressed thongs were in general use, whilst structures of stone and timber replaced the cave homes of earlier man.

The transition to the bronze age was, for western Europe, accompanied by invasion and conquest. The earlier, neolithic inhabitants were *long-headed* (*dolichocephalic*), short-statured folk. Shortly before the introduction of bronze implements, *round-headed* (*brachycephalic*) peoples of far superior physique conquered, but did not exterminate, the neolithic people. The newcomers were further differentiated by the fact that their interments were made in round, rather than oval, graves, or *barrows*. The bronze age men were certainly agriculturists, as well as pastoralists: and the adoption of agriculture seems, generally speaking, to have had the effect of breaking up what may be called the *tribe* into the smaller division, or *clan*. Settlement was commonly in *village communities* on the infertile, but relatively unencumbered uplands, where *extensive* agriculture was

practised, fields being abandoned when their fertility was exhausted.

With the advent of the bronze age, it is clearly impossible to speak, even in outline, of the development of western civilisation as a whole. In northern and western Europe, though a significant advance on the stone age, the bronze epoch is manifestly primitive in character. Inasmuch as it is not illumined by written records, it may be said to belong strictly to the domain of *pre-history*. In the Mediterranean lands, on the other hand, we have crossed the boundary line of acknowledged history. Continuous records are available, and the civilisation, though *ancient*, attains a very high degree of development.

To recapitulate, the earliest form of social organisation appears to have been the group engaged in hunting. This cultural stage lasted substantially unchanged through the long ages of the old stone period. With the commencement of farming, the stage of savagery passed away. Hunting and wandering were abandoned in favour of a settled life; arts and industries became possible; and conditions gradually developed under which men could live together as citizens. In the next chapter, we shall be concerned with the more or less permanent social groups which precede the birth of organised states.

CHAPTER II

Patriarchal Society

THE discovery of agriculture led to the settlement of men in sheltered river valleys.[1] Farming, however, was relatively laborious, and in the open grasslands and extensive ill-watered plains, pastoral pursuits were preferred. In either case, the community would be necessarily small. Farming methods were primitive and wasteful, whilst vast areas were required for grazing the flocks of the pastoral group. Nevertheless, the community, though small, tended to become close-knit by permanent ties of a social and religious nature. This primitive form of social group is commonly called the *tribe*.

With the tribal period of primitive history, records are more abundant and continuous. The art of writing had been discovered in the Near East towards the end of the neolithic period; and by 4000 B.C., in both Egypt and Babylonia, writing had become alphabetic. The Old Testament is one of the earliest narratives descriptive of society in the tribal, or as it is sometimes called, the *patriarchal* stage.[2] It is much later that we find any written account of the peoples of Britain. The first is that of Pytheas of Massilia, which may be approximately dated 325 B.C., some few centuries after the conquest of

1 The need for a strong defensive position, or the difficulty of clearing thickly wooded land, might, as has been noticed (page 9) dictate the choice of uplands in preference to the alluvial valleys.

2 Tribes, however, are not necessarily patriarchal. A good account of the tribal institutions of the Bantu will be found in W. C. Willoughby's *Race Problems in the New Africa* (Oxford, 1923)

the round-headed bronze-age folk by the iron-using *Celts*. Celtic society, too, was essentially tribal, or patriarchal. Even so late as the eleventh century A.D., the Teutonic tribes of western Europe retained many distinctive characteristics of primitive tribal organisation. There is, indeed, very little difficulty in reconstructing the general features of this form of society as, quite apart from historical records, ample material for investigation is provided by the institutions, which are still characteristically patriarchal, of the Bantu of South Africa or the Punjabis of India. The account which follows is based not only upon such written descriptions of primitive tribes as Tacitus' *Germania*, but also on observations of patriarchal institutions of the present day.

Patriarchal society is an organisation of society in kinship groups, under the authority usually of the eldest male ancestor. Unlike the modern state, which is territorial, the patriarchal group is essentially personal. Membership depends on blood relationship, and is independent of geographical boundaries. Frequently, kinship is reckoned through the mother. The tribe is patriarchal but the chief's successor, in this case, will be the son of his eldest sister, and the children pass into the clan of their mother. The relationship is here *matrilineal*, but the mother is not the head of the family. Where the system is both patriarchal and patrilineal, the eldest son succeeds his father in the government of the tribe or family.

Since it is based on kinship, the group is necessarily exclusive, and strangers have no place in the life of the community. Common ownership of the land, which is regarded as belonging in inalienable right to the tribe,

tends to make tribal society non-competitive and non-progressive. Gradually, however, arable land comes to be divided into holdings which have been allotted for cultivation to clans and families. A further distribution of the lands given to each family is carried out under the authority of the patriarch. Neither chief nor patriarch has any right to sell or otherwise dispose of the land. On the other hand, it will be considered a usurpation if land once allotted is taken away, provided that it has been economically cultivated for the support of its holder.

As the patriarchal stage is practically the first form of settled society, the chief interest of the historian naturally attaches to the manner in which the problem of government is approached. The root idea is clearly that of paternal authority. In early Rome, the *patria potestas* included even the power of life and death; and was exercised over the descendants of a living ancestor. The virtually unrestricted authority of the eldest male appears to be a universal feature of patriarchal society. Even now, in some parts of Africa, it is native law that the patriarch may sell members of the family into slavery. At first sight, the individual tribesman seems to be altogether without rights.

Nevertheless, patriarchal authority is more apparent than real. The greatest importance is attached to public opinion. It is seldom that an important decision is taken without the concurrence of those who, by tribal customs, are the constitutional advisers of the chief. If we turn to history, we shall find similar restrictions on the power of the head of the tribe. The Homeric *basileus* and the Teutonic *cyning* were very far from being autocrats. Normally, their position was that of interpreters of the customary law of the community. The business of the

tribe appears to have been transacted, in both cases, by public assemblies of the tribesmen. The assembly, indeed, might be limited to a mere expression of assent or dissent. Even so, the judgment, though pronounced by the chief or elders, was normally that of the assembly as a whole. Though the chief might be held to be the governing authority of the tribe, just as the patriarch was indubitably the ruler of the family, his powers of government were thus closely restricted. The nature of these restrictions will become more apparent when the various functions of government, legislative, executive and judicial, are separately examined. The chief possessed no legislative authority proper; for the notion that law could be made was alien to primitive society. Law existed from time immemorial, and, in many cases, was regarded as the gift of the gods. Justice was hardly a function of government at all, but a private matter for the injured man and his relatives. The primitive law of personal vengeance, expressed in the institution known as the *blood feud*, only gradually gave place to the doctrine that crime was an offence against society. Until that transition had been accomplished, it was no part of the duty of the chief to punish for ordinary crimes. The duty of vengeance fell upon all the members of the same clan or totem, and, at a later stage of society, upon the relatives of the injured man. Should an appeal be made to the chief, it would have to be settled in accordance with tribal custom. Even in the execution of the laws, the chief was subject to the jealous supervision of the elders. There was clearly very little possibility of despotism so long as the compact unity of the patriarchal tribe remained intact.

Nevertheless, development is in the direction of the

autocratic rule of the chief, or king. The tribesfolk ultimately acknowledge themselves to be the subjects of kings. War tends to develop the strength of the government. Success in warfare, no less than failure, involves the disintegration of the tribe. The king becomes the only remaining symbol of the unity of the folk. The tribe is scattered as a landowning aristocracy, or in military garrisons, over wide areas. Religion further exalts the royal authority. Under heathen rites, the sacerdotal functions of the king command respect. The adoption of Christianity tended to develop monarchical authority, for the work of the Christian Church could only be carried out with support from powerful kings. At the same time, the conquest of new territory meant a material increase in the resources of the monarchy. Over the newly conquered land, the king's authority is paramount. If not the owner, he is at least the absolute controller of undistributed estates. He can attach permanently to his service by gifts of land men whom the misfortune of war has left kinless and clanless. As a result, the tie of land comes to be substituted for the tie of kinship, and lordship and servitude gradually transform tribal society.

The dissolution of tribal society under the stress of military necessity thus introduces an altogether new series of relationships. The folk is scattered over too extended an area for it to be possible to summon assemblies of the entire tribe. The need for garrisoning the conquered land and maintaining military efficiency leads to the king summoning to his service bands of warriors, who take a personal oath of fidelity, and are rewarded for their services by grants of landed estates. Admixture of races breaks down tribal exclusiveness,

and in course of time weakens the force of the customary law. At the same time, the growing expense of the royal household suggests searching enquiry into the extent of the royal authority. His officers will claim the profits of jurisdiction—the fines hitherto paid to the injured party in compensation for wrongdoing. Justice slowly becomes a royal perquisite.

We shall find that this process of extension of the royal authority was readily acquiesced in by public opinion. The main occupation of early government is the maintenance of order. For such a function, however, the resources at the king's disposal were often lamentably insufficient. Not only had the prevailing lawlessness and strong sense of tribal independence to be overcome, but the almost insurmountable difficulties of communication. Men were accordingly anxious not to limit, but to extend, the authority of the king, and little importance was attached to individual rights.

But we shall miss the significance of the tribal stage in European history if we neglect to notice the fact that the rudimentary institutions of self-government which tribal society had evolved were never entirely forgotten. On the contrary, there is a continuous thread of development connecting the customary limitations of the patriarchal epoch with those which were developed in the mediæval period to restrain the caprice of irresponsible monarchs. The checks which patriarchal society had succeeded in imposing on the absolute discretion of the chief were two in number. In the first place, there was the theory of *elective* chieftainship, which involved a certain power of rejection. Secondly, there was the very significant limitation involved in the existence of the *council of elders*.

An indefeasible right of hereditary succession is very rare in tribal society. Membership of the royal clan or family is commonly an indispensable qualification; but fitness for office is normally of even greater importance. A limited right of selection almost always vests in the elders, and this body is occasionally found to exercise powers of deposition.

The council of elders is a universal feature of this stage of civilised society. Usually such full tribesmen as are heads of clans, leaders of the host or specially learned in the law, are members. Its powers vary considerably with the importance of the tribe, the extent of its territory and the personality of the individual chief. The main function is the declaration of tribal law, but the co-operation of the elders is commonly sought for all projects of recognised importance.

Tribal conditions pass away with the era of military conquest and the migration of peoples. The institutions, however, of tribal society persist in an attenuated form. It is not difficult to trace the connection between the Teutonic council of *principes* mentioned by Tacitus and the *Witenagemot* of Anglo-Saxon England. The composition of the latter is, to a very much greater extent, under the royal control. Its privilege to tender counsel has become a duty enforceable at the royal pleasure. At the same time, the hereditary principle, in the period succeeding the breakdown of tribal rule, is immeasurably strengthened. The rule, in the kingdoms and subkingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England, is clearly the succession of son to father. Cases of deposition occur, but in most cases they significantly follow successful rebellions. The possibility of armed resistance may indeed be a very effective check to arbitrary power. The king

learns the valuable lesson that his subjects will not suffer more than a certain measure of interference with their liberty and cherished possessions. At the same time, resort to force does not make for orderly government, and it is eminently uncertain in operation. It is no more than a *de facto* restraint on the king, whereas society, in self-protection, has had to evolve some method of legal or constitutional (*de jure*) restraint, which can operate without danger of the destruction of society. This is the product of the constitutional growth of the Middle Ages: and in the process whereby it became effective a significant factor was the survival of the tribal council of elders, in which body historians have seen the germ of modern parliaments and law courts.

Tribal, or patriarchal, society may be said to be an evident advance on the earlier nomadic type. Tribal custom is widely separated from our modern notions of law, but it was a great improvement on savage ideas of *taboo*. By providing a settled form of society and government, it made possible agriculture and industry. Moreover, it attached men in more or less permanent kinship groups, thus providing the basis not only for co-operative effort in material progress, but also for the growth of that sense of corporate responsibility which is at the root of modern conceptions of the state.

CHAPTER III

The City State of the Greeks

CIVILISATION originated among the Babylonians and the Egyptians at a time when western Europe had not emerged from the neolithic age. It was in the Near East that commerce and industry, literature and philosophy, astronomy and architecture, first arose, and very gradually trade and travel availed to spread civilisation over the entire Mediterranean area. In this process, the Cretans, the Phœnicians and the Hittites, were the pioneers. Over the land and sea routes of antiquity, the culture of the ancient centres of civilisation was transmitted by the eager merchants and the hardy mariners of the second millennium B.C.

Many centuries before the appearance in southern Europe of the *Hellenic*, or Greek, peoples, a civilisation of high degree had been extended over the Ægean world by the bronze-using inhabitants of the island of Crete. Whilst the Cretans were extending the ascendancy of their *Minoan* culture northwards, the Hellenes, a race of predominantly *Nordic* type and already acquainted with the use of iron,[1] were advancing south into the Balkan Peninsula. By the close of the millennium, the Hellenes (Achæans, Dorians, Ionians and Æolians) had permanently established themselves over the Peloponnesus and the islands of the Ægean. They thus inherited a civilisation of considerable antiquity, learning from the

1 The use of iron appears to have been introduced into the Near East by the Hittites, and to have been known in Crete and other Mediterranean lands about 1400 B.C.

earlier inhabitants, with whom they freely intermingled, the arts and sciences which had become the common inheritance of the eastern Mediterranean world.

Though profoundly conscious of the spiritual unity of the Hellenic race, the Greeks never sought political unification in a single state. They were content to express the bonds of common religion, language and social ideals in institutions like the *Amphictyonic League*, which provided for a measure of common worship or for general attendance at certain national festivals, without attempting to shape the political destinies of Greece in the direction of a single, unitary state.

Geography, in any case, would have hindered political unification in a country where mountain ranges broke up the land area into countless tiny valleys, whilst an irregular coastline served to accentuate the isolation of the small coastal plains, severed from easy communication with one another by steep promontories. These conditions exercised a determining influence on political development. The Greeks settled down in city communities, grouped about a central place of refuge, narrowly confined by sea or hills, but with an attendant area large enough to provide an economic basis for the existence of the community.

The valuable contributions of the Greeks to European civilisation were thus made in a form of the state which, in many respects, is unique. The *polis*, or city state, of Greece, was something more than a self-governing city in the modern sense. It summed up the aspirations, political, social and religious, of the Greek people, and claimed their fullest allegiance. It was at once the country, the religion, the university and the social-club of the free-born citizen. Outside the *polis*, he became

an outcast.[1] Within it, he could develop his individuality, and utilise to the full his best abilities. In short, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the Greek city state furnishes the most concentrated and highly organised type of political community. According to Aristotle, the greatest political thinker of ancient times, "the city is the highest of all forms of association, and embraces all the rest".

The city state was the centre of literature, art and scientific speculation; and it is in these departments mainly that the Greek contributions towards the progressive development of western culture were made. Their thought, their craftsmanship, and possibly even their artistic genius they owed in part to the earlier civilisations of the Ægean area. Their restless curiosity and quick intelligence made for great assimilative powers. From Egypt they learnt much about architecture, astronomy, medicine and geometry; from Crete they acquired the mechanical and industrial arts; from the Phœnicians they took over and improved the alphabet, the art of navigation, and the vast mercantile lore of the carriers of the ancient Orient. But the Greeks were more than mere transmitters of civilisation. Having built up out of the philosophic speculations of Egypt and Syria an ordered system of knowledge, they virtually founded modern philosophy, as the science which endeavours to give a rational explanation of the entire universe. They were the first to proceed on the assumption that the world was governed by a regular and unchanging law: and the invention of the scientific

1 It should, however, be noted that, in some relatively isolated districts, there were tribes which had not developed city life in the fifth century B.C.

method—the method of experimentation and accurate observation of all available data—may be fairly ascribed to the school of Greek thinkers, of which Aristotle was the most eminent member.

One can do no more than summarise the achievements of the Greeks in thought. A few facts of outstanding importance may be insisted upon. In the first place, it was the Greek Democritus who first suggested the atomic theory of the world's origin. Eudoxus by his systematic description of the constellations, established his title to be regarded as the founder of the science of astronomy. The so-called *Ptolemaic System*, as conceived by Hipparchus[1] and perfected in the second century A.D. by Ptolemy, though unsound in its main contention, embodied truths of fundamental significance; and was not assailed until fourteen hundred years later.

To Aristotle may be fairly ascribed the origination of the science of zoology. In the department of medicine, Hippocrates laboriously recorded the experiences of numerous priest-physicians in all parts of the Mediterranean world, with scientific regard for the operation of natural laws.

In literature and art, the classical products of Greece form the starting-point and the inspiration of all later progress. Whilst contact with older Semitic and Egyptian civilisations had doubtless provided the original stimulus, intellectual alertness was largely the

1 Hipparchus (161–126 B.C.) belongs to the so-called Hellenistic period of culture. In his observatory at Rhodes, he invented the astrolabe, and suggested lines of latitude and longitude. Ptolemy was the first to suggest that the earth was not at the exact centre of the planetary spheres; and, though he continued to maintain that it was immovable, his theories were supported by the most patient and detailed observations.

product of political and geographical environment. The Greeks enjoyed the advantage of living in a number of autonomous communities amid an atmosphere of intense local patriotism and friendly emulation. Their Aryan language was an unrivalled instrument for expressing thought. Abundantly supplied with marble, the best possible medium for architecture and sculpture, the Greeks were able to produce beautifully proportioned buildings, graceful columns, and statuary which is still the unapproachable standard. Moreover, the Greek ideal was essentially that of the cultured man of ample leisure and peaceful disposition, with no exacting occupations likely to interfere with the pursuit of knowledge and happiness. With little or no restraint on free discussion, and considerable public expenditure on art, conditions were ideally suited for a manifold cultural development. The fifth century B.C. was the great age of the Greeks in both politics and culture. The most beautiful monuments of all time were originated in that wonderful century which produced "classics" in almost every branch of culture. Greek temples exquisitely proportioned were multiplied under the influence of the public-spirited devotion of countless local communities, each with its religious cult and ritual practices. Unsurpassed skill in craftsmanship and pride in individual achievement were conspicuous. Athenian sculpture gave to the world the noble works of Pheidias. Marvellous fertility of imagination, perfect symmetry, and unexampled realism, were among the prominent characteristics of Greek art. In literature and poetry, oratory and history, the Greeks reached the highest pitch of excellence. It is impossible in a book of this compass to attempt even a summary of the achievements

of Greek genius; but we may note in passing that two new types of literature were originated by the Greeks: the drama (the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles) and prose history (Herodotus).

In public affairs and in government, the restless activity of the Greeks produced a variety of political expedients, and a literature of political science. Aristotle's *Politics* is the first inductive study of constitutions; and, even for the twentieth-century student, affords a valuable commentary on the working of political institutions. In practice, the Greeks failed to achieve stability in their political arrangements, the spirit of faction finally bringing about the downfall of the independent city state. On the other hand, the Greeks were the real originators of the democratic form of government; whilst the germ of the conception of constitutional law may be traced in their arrangements for guaranteeing the liberties of the citizen body. It is to Greece that the student of history must turn to investigate the tendencies of democratic and oligarchic rule: and accordingly, we shall devote some space to a consideration of their political ideals and experiments.

We have noticed very briefly the importance of geography in Greek development, as tending to create small communities developing along distinct lines. The military predominance of any one city, or group of cities, was rendered difficult, Macedonia in the north being the only potentially formidable unit. Geography thus made for non-aggression, as well as separateness. At the same time, there was lacking the incentive towards unity which arises in the presence of alien and hostile peoples.

Within the territory of the independent city, climatic conditions contributed to mould the economic and social

development. The olive and the vine gave ample opportunities for leisure, whilst cultivation of the sandy, barren soil, could be left to slaves or indigent country dwellers. Climate may have been partly responsible for the prevalence of that open-air club life which begat equality, and made democratic institutions a natural growth.

The principle of democracy is that every citizen shall be free to participate in every aspect of the life of the community. The active co-operation of all citizens in the government of the state is implied. Co-operation, however, may mean no more than the right to express an opinion by exercise of the vote. In modern democracies, it is manifestly impossible for the people directly to govern itself. As a consequence, the powers of legislation and administration are entrusted to representatives, subject to a degree of popular control. Where these representatives are amenable to the same jurisdiction as ordinary citizens, the *rule of law* is said to obtain. This rule is regarded as a most important safeguard for the continuance of democratic government. Nevertheless, under modern, representative democracy, it is obvious that the political functions exercised by the majority of the citizens do not amount to continuous participation in the direction of the state's activities.

Such a system would have appeared to the Greeks fundamentally aristocratic. Their ideal was self-realisation; and this was held to be incapable of attainment under any system which excluded the individual citizen from public activities. Aristotle's definition of a citizen is "one who is capable of ruling, and of being ruled in turn". At Athens, democracy was intended to be the personal rule of each citizen. It was, indeed, recognised that not all the people could rule at the same time; and

that, for purposes of administration, the people must be represented by magistrates and counsellors. But the domination of the popular will at all times was secured by measures which provided for the appointment and control of representatives; and in particular by the law, attributed to Solon, which made all subject to summary punishment by the *demos*. Moreover, a far greater proportion of the citizens of the democratic Greek city shared actively, at some time or other, in the work of administration than has been achieved by the most democratic of modern communities.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that Greek democracy tended to degenerate into government by a leisured class in the selfish interests of that class. Their conception of citizenship implied the exclusion of those who followed the necessary but laborious pursuits of the community. Greek philosophers assumed a degree of enlightenment and leisure in the privileged citizen body, which was only made possible by the existence of a numerous class of artisans and slaves.

It will be necessary at this stage to discuss briefly what is implied by the use of such political terms as "constitution", and "sovereignty".

The constitution of a state is the form of its government, expressed in laws and established customs which lay down how and by whom the powers of the state are to be exercised. Sovereignty is supremacy within the constitution. The sovereign known to the law is, in any state, the person or group of persons whose authority is subject to no legal limitation, and whose competence to decide affairs of state will not be questioned in any court of law. Reference is sometimes made to a "political sovereign"; and in this case the meaning which it is

intended to convey is that the ultimate decision, practically though not legally, is in the hands of a body other than the legal sovereign; and this body is very commonly the electorate.

Now, if we turn to the acutest political thinkers of the Greek world, we shall find it difficult to reconcile these conceptions with Greek notions of the state and its constitution. To Aristotle, the word "constitution" (*politeia*) means something more than the arrangement of offices and the distribution of powers in the state. It is the ethical end of the community—the perfect life after which state and citizens are striving. Obviously this end will be fundamentally different in a democratic community from that of its oligarchic neighbours. And, inasmuch as the history of nearly all Greek states is largely the story of the rise and fall of these opposing conceptions of society, there is some force in Aristotle's further statement that "the constitution is the governing class".

There is no need to follow Aristotle in his classification of constitutions, as his distinctions are without practical significance, when applied to modern states. It is important to notice, however, that Aristotle everywhere assumes that those who govern are necessarily sovereign. That is because the assembly which possessed the decisive voice in the government of the Greek city state was, normally, a body which included the entire citizen class. There could clearly be no appeal beyond its decisions. In a country state, any such assembly would be an obvious impossibility; but the practice, in some democratic communities of the present day, of referring important matters to the people is an approximation to the Greek practice. The electorate is thus organised as

a final court of appeal from the decisions of the parliament or executive government. The active participation of the people as a whole in the work of government is clearly increased, where this system, which is known as the *referendum*, is regularly employed. The initiative, however, is still left in the hands of the people's representatives; and the mere power to reject a proposal is far from the Greek ideal of active partnership. A closer approach is to be discerned in those ultra-democratic communities of the modern world, which have entrusted to a quorum of citizens the right to initiate measures, which will subsequently be voted upon by the electorate. Even in such cases, however, it is difficult to regard the people as the effective sovereign, for they do little more than share with their representatives the right of legislation. The democracy of ancient Greece is unique in history as guaranteeing not merely popular control over officials, but active participation of citizens in the executive and judicial branches of government.

For the most part, Greek cities lived an isolated life, passing through a cycle of changes from monarchy to aristocracy, thence to tyranny, and finally settling down under oligarchic, or democratic institutions. At Athens, the process of development was peculiar in more than one respect. The Athenians were the first to achieve a completely democratic *régime*, under which sovereignty was effectively exercised by the governing assembly, or *Ecclesia*. At the same time, it was the Athenians who made the first significant attempt to form out of a multitude of self-governing cities a wider political whole—an attempt which, had it been successful, would have been a promising step towards *federal government*. The opportunity arose out of the defeat of the Persians (490–

479 B.C.)—an achievement which made possible the survival of western civilisation.[1] The pressure of invasion had, for the moment, united oligarchs and democrats, Ionians and Dorians: and Athenians and Spartans had been allies in the campaigns which led to Marathon and Thermopylæ. Though the fruits of victory had included the emancipation of the Greek cities of Asia Minor, so that the entire Ægean basin had been made safe for Hellenic civilisation, common prudence dictated the continuance of co-operation, as a safeguard against resurgence of the Persian menace. Unfortunately, disunion again appeared. Sparta withdrew to form a purely Peloponnesian league, pledged to maintain the cause of oligarchy. Athens remained leader of a confederacy of autonomous states, which came gradually to be transformed into an empire of subject cities.

To the twentieth-century student, the process is not without significance. How to reconcile formal unity with the fullest measure of independent nationhood is the chief problem of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Hitherto the proposal to establish a parliament, or council, of imperial delegates, invested with authority to make decisions on weighty matters of imperial interest has not been favourably received. The Dominions have shown a not unnatural disinclination to surrender the smallest measure of their existing autonomy. Sentiment in the United Kingdom, on the other hand, has been opposed to the suggested withdrawal of the new imperial executive from responsibility to the existing Parliament at Westminster. It was precisely this dilemma

1 The Persians, however, must not be regarded as inimical to all material and cultural progress. Darius built a canal to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, and the Persian Empire played an important part in the diffusion of civilisation.

which wrecked the so-called *Confederacy of Delos*. At the outset, a federal union had been intended, which would ensure common deliberation and united action in matters affecting the common interest, whilst preserving a full measure of local independence. But the existence of a single member of disproportionate strength, to whom in the main the other members of the league must look for effective preservation from the common foe, is always an obstacle to federal stability. From the first, Athens stood forth as the sole executive authority. The officials of the league were Athenian magistrates; and, though judicial and deliberative powers were nominally vested in central bodies of delegates, a significant limitation of their authority was involved in the practice whereby Athens individually fixed the nature and the amount of the contribution of each member. The effective control of policy was thus inevitably withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Delian assembly, and concentrated at the dominant city.

The new imperial status of Athens hastened the advent of pure democracy. The gravest decisions of imperial policy now came before the Ecclesia, whilst the *Heliaia* (popular jury-courts established *c.* 595 B.C., by the legislator Solon), called upon to adjudicate on appeals from the subject cities, were organised to admit of permanent sessions. Payment for attendance was introduced by the statesman Pericles. By the time of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.), the use of the *lot* for filling offices had become nearly universal. Originally, perhaps, an expedient to secure divine approbation, or to obviate recourse to bribery and canvassing, the system had come to be an important safeguard for democracy. It ensured the strict sub-

ordination of the Council, or *Boule*, and of the magistrates. The former, as a relatively small body, in permanent session and with accumulated administrative experience, was an obvious rival to the unwieldy assembly. The danger was averted by use of the lot, and by the organisation of the Boule into groups of fifty councillors who held office for no more than one-tenth of the year.

In the case of magistrates, the use of the lot is, at first sight, opposed to all principles of efficiency and good government. There were, however, safeguards, which enabled the system to work better than might have been anticipated. Not only were offices very numerous and duties light, but, with few exceptions, the same civil office could not be held twice. Public opinion restrained the unfit from offering themselves for the lot; and all magistrates were subjected to strict examination at the end of their annual term. Offices which demanded a measure of professional skill, notably that of the *strategos*, or general, were never filled by the method of the lot. The system may be defended on many grounds: it made fraud difficult, ensured a wide distribution of executive office, and a fair average of ability; most important of all, in the eyes of the Athenians, it prevented individuals securing positions of dangerous authority.[1]

The political institutions of the Athenians have been subjected to criticism, which has been, on the whole, unfavourable. The weakest point is the organisation of the popular jury courts. Composed of the poorest and least enlightened class of citizens, these courts received no impartial legal guidance, and were only too likely to be swayed by class prejudice, or personal animosity. No

1 Consult J. W. Headlam-Morley, *Election by Lot at Athens* (Cambridge, 1891).

appeal was allowed from their verdicts; and, inasmuch as they were the only irresponsible officials at Athens, these citizen juries may be regarded as the real arbiters of the constitution.

A second defect lay in the opportunities for obstruction on the part of unscrupulous demagogues, who posed as "champions of the people", and yet consistently declined the responsibilities of office. Under the Athenian system, the initiative lay with the individual, so that political responsibility could not always be brought home. Proposals might be, and often were, carried in the Ecclesia against the wishes of the *strategoi* and other magistrates, who would yet be entrusted with the execution of the necessary measures. This divorce of power and responsibility was a fatal defect in the system of government of the Athenian city state.[1]

Economically, the Athenian city state rested on an unsound basis. The policy of payments and largesses to the poorer citizens tended to deterioration of enterprise and self-dependence. Payment for attendance at the Ecclesia indicated declining interest in public affairs. The three *obols* (*c.* 4½*d.*) a day earned by attendance at assembly or law courts about covered the expenses of subsistence of a family of three or four persons. But public emoluments took other forms. The ease-loving citizen could rely on largesses of corn, payments at public sacrifices, and a share in the revenue accruing from confiscation of private property. The growth of a pauper citizen class of decreasing vitality was thus a consequence of the democratic control achieved in more prosperous days. The evil is partly traceable to the Empire, and the incoming tribute affording endowment for the idle classes.

1 *Cambridge Ancient History*, v, pp. 108–10.

On the other hand, it is not true that Athenian democracy and culture were entirely dependent on a basis of slave labour. Even in the fourth century B.C., many of the citizens continued to find occupation in agriculture. The magnificent buildings of Athens were the work of free and bond alike. Moreover, slaves were not only well treated, but allowed to accumulate private property, and ultimately to purchase their freedom.

Nevertheless, the economic situation was unstable throughout. After the Peloponnesian War, slaves slowly but surely dispossessed the free citizen in industry and finally in agriculture. The income of the citizen came to be dependent on tribute from subject cities and slave-run mines. The leisured[1] existence of the privileged Athenian was thus contingent on success in war, and the absence of such internal calamities as drought and pestilence. The city state had ceased to be self-sufficing, and could not even supply the daily wants of the citizens from within the territory of the state. The old conception of the *polis* as an independent, self-sufficing unit had given place to the idea of empire and of a single dominant city. In the later years of the fifth century, the expedient of billeting colonies, or *cleruchies*, of indigent Athenians on allied and subject states had to be introduced. In the succeeding century, distress led to progressive decline in population.

1 The extent to which love of leisure and contempt for industry prevailed at Athens and other Greek city states should not be exaggerated. Down to the Peloponnesian War, the greater part of the soil of Attica was cultivated by small citizen proprietors. The majority of the city states of the Peloponnese remained self-sufficing in the matter of food production. In the trading cities, such as Athens and Corinth, citizens were very largely occupied in trade and industry, though some handicrafts were looked upon as base.

Our attention has been practically confined to the city state of Athens. Of Sparta, with her stable oligarchical constitution, her dual monarchy, and the disciplined life of her citizens, we have no time to speak. A few general points must conclude our survey of the Greek city state.

The most significant point is the failure to achieve a measure of national unity. The Confederacy of Delos degenerated with ominous rapidity into an empire of conquest and absorption. Only in the third century, under the stimulus of the danger from Macedon, was a quasi-federal union achieved, in the Achæan and Ætolian Leagues. Throughout the "glorious age" of Greece, it remains true that the ideal of the Greek citizen was the supremacy of his particular city with its ethical end and peculiar mode of life. It was on the rock of bitter, inter-state enmity that Greek civilisation foundered.

Democracy was direct, not representative. This made it possible for the Greeks to achieve a more complete identification of the citizen with the state than any later system has achieved. At the same time, the *representative principle* was not entirely unknown. It was used within the state for election of representatives by the tribe or clan, as well as for the council of the Amphictyonic League, and for the two federal assemblies of the third century. The modern theory that representatives have the full authority of their constituents was a later, mediæval development.[1]

Hellenic civilisation did not perish with the downfall of the independent city state. On the contrary, it was

1 The representative system was, however, well known to the Romans. It was apparently introduced into Macedonia by Æmilius Paulus 168 B.C. In the early Middle Ages, it survived in the assemblies and councils of the Western Church.

extended over the ancient Orient by the victorious armies of Alexander the Great. This is the so-called Hellenistic Age, extending from the Macedonian conquests to the Roman invasion of the eastern Mediterranean lands. Politically, it witnessed the spread of the city state with a measure of internal self-government. The leading feature, outside politics, is the extension of Greek language and culture, with, however, significant new developments, especially in the departments of philosophy and astronomy. Under the Romans, the great achievements of the Greeks became the common inheritance of the western world.

CHAPTER IV

Rome

WE have seen that the Greek world was divided into a large number of geographically self-contained states, in such a way as to make aggression and conquest a matter of difficulty. It is not easy to exaggerate the importance of geography as perpetuating isolated city life, and prohibiting the accomplishment of Greek unity. Rome, though originally a city state of the same type as Athens, succeeded in incorporating the various communities of the Italian peninsula, and ultimately distant territories of the Mediterranean world, under a common imperial government. It has been argued that the Greeks lacked the Roman "faculty of union", but the wonderful power of recuperation and cohesion displayed by the Byzantine, or Greek, Empire of the Middle Ages will make the careful student of history hesitate to accept this view. We shall probably conclude that Rome's career of successful conquest originated in geographical opportunity and eminently suitable institutions.

Nevertheless, the Romans were, in temperament and natural abilities, sharply contrasted with the Greeks. Less brilliant and intellectual, they were yet strong on the side of organisation and discipline. Their intense practical-mindedness and methodical persistence admirably suited them for the duties of government. They were ready to study the customs and institutions of the people they conquered, and to incorporate in their systems of law and administration what was most likely

to prove of permanent utility. This involved treating defeated enemies as friends, rather than as tribute-paying subjects; and the gradual extension of Roman citizenship finally produced something approaching an Italian nation. Without any conscious attempt to Romanise the subject peoples, Rome, by her wise toleration of local customs and provincial independence, gradually absorbed the races of the ancient world into a free and organic union.

The significance of Roman history lies in the successful advance beyond the stage of the city state; in the achievement of an organic imperial commonwealth. With the Greeks, all political rights depended on membership of a city. Citizenship was exclusive, being but seldom conferred on the inhabitants of dependent cities. Rome not only offered the benefits of her citizenship to alien peoples, but finally constructed a splendid edifice of natural law, founded partly on Greek philosophy, partly on common customs in the legal institutions of the Mediterranean races. To the twentieth-century student, the Roman Empire must always be the starting-point of enquiries into problems of imperial statesmanship. Wherein lay the secret of Rome's power of assimilation and unification? By what means did she secure the willing acquiescence of western Europe in her imperial rule? Can we trace any glimmering of the notion that empire is based on a higher ideal than that of self-interest—the ideal, in fact, of the purposive education of backward peoples?

What is known of the earliest period of Roman history goes to support the view that military expansion was the natural product of favourable circumstances. A group of seven hills, not formidable in height, but conveniently situated for occupation by a single tribe, afforded an

admirable defensive position, which, moreover, through its very unsuitability to commerce, would necessitate the continuance of purely agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Whilst agriculture would breed a race of hardy soldiers, cattle rearing would inevitably tend to produce tribal disputes, and so to encourage warfare. Throughout the republican period, Rome was essentially uncommercial. Ostia remained no more than a village; and the sand-bar which obstructed the mouth of the Tiber was not dredged until A.D. 42. There is no indication of the existence, prior to the establishment of the Empire, of any strong commercial interests. Trade, such as there was, was left to aliens. Wealth could thus only come in the form of cattle or other booty secured through war.

The early institutions of Rome were very probably shaped with a view to more or less continual warfare. At some early period, the people, or privileged patricians (the dependent *plebs* not yet having acquired organisation) were embodied in *centuries* or regiments, retaining this machinery even when meeting in primary assembly, or *Comitia*. The fall of the monarchy (510 B.C.) was followed by the entrusting of power (*imperium*) to two *consuls*, elected for one year by the Comitia, one of whom could always be away on campaign. Thereafter, the policy of military expansion would obviously be continued until the state had achieved a position of security and power. In the patrician magistrates, Rome possessed a class of trained generals and administrators, whose interests would doubtless be served by wars in which their expert leadership would be indispensable; whereas domestic strife would tend to abate under the stimulus of external danger. Moreover, the acquiescence of the

people would be the more readily secured, inasmuch as success in war would bring more land and more cattle.

On the other hand, it is important to recognise that there were influences making for non-aggression and for recognition of the rights of neighbouring communities. The people, who themselves determined the issues of peace and war, would not be likely recklessly to vote for an aggressive campaign, in which they would have to risk their lives, in addition to paying an onerous war tax. Indeed, self-control (*gravitas*) and respect for law (*pietas*) were early characteristics of the Roman temperament. Their ingrained caution and reluctance to proceed to extremities is notably illustrated in the *jus fetiale*, which required the investigation of disputes with foreign peoples by a priestly college, with a stipulation that, in every case, thirty days' notice should be allowed before the commencement of hostilities.

The historian Mommsen suggested that the policy of Rome was not intentionally aggressive; but might be explained as a case of the offensive-defensive. The early development by the Romans of a rudimentary law of nations (*jus gentium*); and the liberal treatment of the cities of Latium go to support this view.

Internally, the development was largely moulded by the varying fortunes of war. Supreme power tended to pass into the hands of the Senate, originally the tribal council of elders, which, under the Republic, came to include most of the trained administrators and ex-magistrates of the city—an assembly thus much more likely to achieve the necessary continuity of policy than either the popularly constituted Comitia, or the annually elected magistrates. On the other hand, the gradual admission to privileges of citizenship of the plebeian

class was conceded in return for co-operation in the work of conquest. Here we already meet with an important variation from the Greek development. In the majority of Greek city states, the privileged class maintained its rights unimpaired. At Rome, the citizen body was progressively widened; and originally rightless classes admitted to something approaching equality of status.

The history may be summarised very briefly. A noticeable feature is the success with which the plebeian classes demanded at first protection, and later admission to the more important magistracies, as the price of their participation in defence of the city. The threat to secede altogether and found a separate city was used in 494 to secure the institution of two tribunes of the plebs; and again after the capture of the city by the Gauls (390). Meanwhile, the authority of the consuls had been limited (443) by the appointment of two *censors*, with the important power of degrading citizens and senators for unworthy conduct; and, in the fourth century, by the creation of further magistracies, of which the most important was the *prætorship*, since it was largely through the edicts of the prætors that equity and humanity were introduced as the guiding principles of the law of Rome. The peculiarity of this development lies in the overlapping of jurisdiction, and the deliberate multiplication of magistrates, with a view to restraining the initiative of holders of the *imperium*.

The successful struggle of the plebeians for political equality with the patricians involved a notable widening of the conception of citizenship. As at Athens, it was the citizens themselves who decided the issues of war and peace and elected the magistrates. It was not until

287 that the plebeian assembly achieved equality of status and of legislative power with the older assemblies of the people in wards, centuries or tribes. Even so, the *populus* enjoyed none of the prerogatives of debate, criticism and active participation in public affairs which were exercised by the sovereign *demos* at Athens. The *Comitia*, as it was called, was powerless to amend or to criticise the proposals of the magistrates, who, with the aristocratic Senate, enjoyed the reality of power at Rome. But, though democracy was to make little headway, there was to be equality of political rights among all citizens. In 367 it was enacted that one of the consuls must always be a plebeian; and by the close of the fourth century, all the important offices had been thrown open. The citizen body, privileged to hold office, and to give the final vote in legislation and criminal justice, thus came to include every section of the populace.

The external expansion of Rome was significantly slow. The cities of Latium were not finally subdued till 338. More than a generation of further fighting was necessary to consolidate her hold over central and southern Italy, threatened by the warlike Samnites. Whilst military roads and colonies were established to extend and secure Rome's position, reliance was chiefly placed on a policy of far-sighted conciliation to forward a process of voluntary incorporation and fusion. The concession of Roman citizenship to former enemies was a significant experiment which goes far to explain Rome's success as a governing power. Taxation was not imposed; and though the direction of external policy was concentrated in the hands of the Roman Senate and magistrates, valuable privileges were given in return. Nor was local self-government materially impaired. This

wise moderation partly explains the relative ease with which the rest of the peninsula was induced to accept Roman rule. By the close of the fourth century, with the defeat of the formidable Etruscans, Rome may be said to have secured her effective dominion over Italy south of the Tiber. The complete reduction of all parts of the peninsula cannot be dated earlier than 266 B.C.

The success of Rome is to be attributed chiefly to the distinctive character of the Roman people, especially their self-restraint, love of order and sense of discipline. No state could match her in the military efficiency of her soldiers or the administrative skill of her senatorial class. Moreover, Roman rule afforded the advantages of stable and united government, and of a harmonious legal system adapted to the needs of the civilised Mediterranean world.

There is no need to follow the military fortunes of Rome through the wars of the last three centuries of the republican era. The career of conquest brought Roman armies into Greece as "liberators" from Macedonian "oppression". Syria and Armenia were next invaded. In Spain, Rome stepped in as heir of the overthrown Carthaginian Empire. 146 B.C. is a notable date which records the incorporation within the Empire of Macedonia, Greece and Africa. Pergamum, Cisalpine Gaul, Crete, Cilicia, Cyprus and Egypt followed (133–30 B.C.), whilst the famous campaigns of Julius Cæsar (58–50 B.C.) brought Gaul as far as the Rhine and the Atlantic under Roman authority.

War brought some deterioration of the original magnanimity of her external policy. Though city autonomy was still to be respected, leagues of cities were ruthlessly suppressed. Moreover, by the second century

B.C., Roman expansion had come to be manifestly aggressive, notably in the case of the Third Punic War. On the other hand, the *lex Julia* of 90 B.C., significantly conceded Roman citizenship to all the cities of Italy.

Politically, war produced a progressive widening of Roman citizenship, though it precluded democratic development. Economically and morally, it was the cause of most of the ills of republican society. The heavy burden of military service reduced to penury the small landowner. The glamour of military life, with its attendant largesses, attracted men from the laborious occupation of farming. Whilst the estates of wealthy patricians were worked by slaves, the yeoman's land necessarily went untilled when he followed the eagles. In early years, the distribution in small plots of conquered land served to relieve the distress. The practice grew up, however, for such land to be retained as *ager publicus*, and largely appropriated for the use of the patricians. The *Licinian law* (367), prohibiting the occupation by a citizen of more than 500 *jugera* (about 312 acres) did no more than temporarily check this practice. Agriculture on a small scale was ceasing to be profitable. Large estates (*latifundia*) worked by gangs of slaves, displaced the small holdings of the peasantry. The markets were flooded with cheap tributary wheat from the provinces. Even the well-meaning C. Gracchus (123–121 B.C.) contributed to hasten the ruin of Italian agriculture by permitting citizens to purchase corn from the public granaries at one-half the market price. By the close of the second century, the free peasantry throughout Italy was sinking irremediably into debt. Finally, in 58 B.C., the free distribution of corn to the urban

population of Rome (*annona civica*) was instituted. Under such circumstances, the yeomen gave up the unequal struggle, and, in company with countless men of broken fortunes, flocked to Rome to enjoy the free food and gladiatorial shows.

From agriculture, Italy turned to the olive and the vine, tended largely by slaves. The economic position steadily worsened under the influence of the incoming tribute and the growing needs of an idle, non-producing population. There was a noticeable decay in public morals. So early as 432, bribery and corruption had necessitated the adoption of a law against canvassing; but, in the second and first centuries B.C., the evil grew to gigantic proportions. The large profits made by private contractors out of provincial revenues was a further abuse. The old sensible government of conquered tribes had been followed by the shameless exploitation of the provinces by men like Verres and Lucullus. At the same time, the lower classes were steadily demoralised by the loot resulting from warfare, and by the dole which the idlest citizen received as of right, without either loss of the vote or the obligation to work. Parental discipline, the old *patria potestas*, declined. Finally, the Republic passed away, because the old Roman character which had made possible the working of republican institutions, had disappeared.

With the fall of the Roman Republic, we reach the termination of the history of the independent city state of antiquity. It had undoubtedly fostered a high degree of public spirit within the citizen class. The true ideal of the citizen had been conceived to be essentially a life of public service and neighbourly conduct.

Failure to respect liberty in others, however, was

largely responsible for the ruin of the Greek *polis*: and, though Rome applied the principles of toleration and compromise, the last days of republican rule witnessed a sad falling-away from earlier practice. Within the state, the citizen body, though public-spirited, was often selfish and cruel; and was eventually demoralised by bad laws, especially by ill-considered public charity. Economically, the city state achieved no basis of stability. War inevitably produced parasitism. Athens and Rome alike came to be dependent on extensive importation of foreign corn. In industry, as well as agriculture, the free citizen was sooner or later displaced by the slave.

The city state perished through its failure to achieve a secure economic basis. It fostered a love of beauty and a passion for self-government, whilst inspiring a high degree of skill in oratory, diplomacy and the arts. But the good life of the philosopher could only be attained by the limited few; and the fatality of warfare finally made even so restricted a conception of citizenship unrealisable.

Julius Cæsar was, perhaps, the first Roman to grasp the fact that the machinery of the city state was inadequate for the government of a Mediterranean empire. His consummate genius marks him out as one of the great men of history. His work in Gaul, Egypt and the East establishes his right to be regarded as the real founder of the Roman Empire. In the last years of his life, he undertook the infinitely more hazardous task of internal reconstruction. His murder, in 44 B.C., transferred to the capable hands of his great-nephew Caius Octavius (subsequently known as Augustus) the work of erecting an imperial constitution. The primary need was the erection of a central authority, and the sub-

ordination to that authority of the hitherto irresponsible provincial governors. The events of the preceding century had discredited both Senate and magistrates; and the way appeared to be open for an entirely new organisation on an imperial basis. But Augustus, mindful of the fate of Julius Cæsar, was much too cautious to set aside the familiar landmarks of the past; and, whilst achieving centralisation of authority in his own person, he conciliated conservative opinion by arrangements which involved a sharing of authority with the Senate. The republican framework of government was maintained whilst Augustus took for himself the title of *Princeps*, or first citizen. It was the Senate which bestowed on him powers extensive in nature, but not unknown to the republican constitution. Nominally, the Princeps was no more than president of the Roman Republic. In reality, however, Augustus was sole chief magistrate of Rome, with powers virtually assured for life. In the succeeding years, new powers were gradually added, and the independence of the Senate undermined. Uncontrolled despotism, however, did not come in before the close of the second century A.D., with the rule of Septimius Severus.

The admirable government of the provinces by Augustus, and his wise opposition to further extension of the frontiers, made it possible for his successors to concentrate on the work of internal administration. It was Augustus who first made the *pax romana* an established reality. His provincial subordinates were carefully selected, and a considerable measure of local autonomy guaranteed. His immediate successors, on the whole, maintained his methods; and, during the first two centuries A.D., the Mediterranean world may

be said to have enjoyed an unexampled period of peace and material prosperity.

The glorious *Age of the Antonines* was followed by a period of military turmoil, ushered in by the assassination of Commodus (180). The dependence of the Emperor on the soldiers was now manifest. Despotism alternated with the feeble rule of military upstarts. Republican institutions everywhere tended to disappear, whilst formidable assaults on the frontiers from the Teutonic tribes of the North heralded the approaching dissolution. Ruin was, however, temporarily averted through the energetic statesmanship of Diocletian (284–305). The Senate was finally deprived of all vestiges of its ancient authority, and absolute monarchy undisguisedly established. More important was the effort to establish a fixed and regular succession to the throne, the division of the Empire into an eastern and a western sphere, and the remodelling of the whole provincial system.

Diocletian could do no more than postpone the imminent ruin. When Constantine took up his residence at the ancient Byzantium (330), the fate of the western portion was sealed. Italy had never recovered economic self-sufficiency; and the loss of the richer corn-producing provinces of the East was irreparable. The finances of the West rapidly declined; and, with the loss of its chief remaining source of revenue, Africa, to the Vandals (*c.* 440), the fall of Italy could not long be delayed.

For centuries the Empire had been confronted by no formidable foe. Commencing, however, in the third century, there developed a continuous and ever-increasing pressure along the whole northern frontier from Teutonic and Slavonic tribes, themselves impelled

forward by the land hunger of peoples in their rear. Whilst the Emperor at Constantinople succeeded in the long run in throwing back these assailants, the resistance of the West collapsed altogether towards the close of the fifth century.

Why did the East survive, while the West succumbed? Much may be attributed to the incomparable position for offence and defence of Constantinople, to greater geographical cohesion, and to the fact that the brunt of the barbarian invasions fell on the more scattered and disunited territories of the West. In earlier centuries, the Empire had been held together by its governmental and military organisation, and the cohesive force of excellent roads. But the difficulties to be overcome in the West were immensely greater than any which confronted the rulers of Constantinople. The eastern Mediterranean was the home of civilisations of great antiquity. Before the appearance of the Roman eagles in the coastlands of the Ægean, the problems of government had been solved by the Greeks and Macedonians. Commerce was active, literature and art flourishing, city life almost universal. The West, with the exception of Italy, was relatively barbaric. Its resources were incomparably inferior.

The downfall of the Empire in the West was a gradual process. Whilst the barbarians were exercising a continuous pressure on the northern frontier, large bodies of Germans were being settled on vacant land within the Empire. The intention had been to use the newcomers for frontier defence, and to fill territories which were rapidly becoming depopulated. The final result, however, was very much as if the invaders had entered into undisputed possession. Peaceful penetration by the

Germanic tribes soon rendered the Empire helpless against its barbaric foes.

The collapse was accelerated by the decline in free manhood, consequent on the ruinous financial system, and the rigidity of the centralised administration. All over the Empire, population and productivity were on the decline. In the country districts, the free yeomanry had practically disappeared, and the land was tilled by the dependent *colonus*, bound to the soil. In the towns, there was even less freedom. The provincial assemblies and the *municipia* had long ceased to offer resistance to the centralised bureaucracy. The placing of responsibility for collection of the taxes on the members of the municipal council, or *curia*, made public service a lifelong servitude. Everywhere the tax-paying classes were breaking down under the grievous burden of fiscal exactions. Sheer economic exhaustion was at the root of the process which culminated in the disappearance of the Empire in the West.

In the East, the crushing defeat of the Emperor Valens at Adrianople (378),[1] was partly repaired by the energy of Theodosius. On his death (395), the Empire was divided on a permanent basis. The remaining legions were speedily withdrawn from the Rhine and from Britain, and concentrated for the defence of Italy. The invasions of Radagaisus (405) was a foretaste of what was to come. Four years later, invaders swept in a devastating torrent through Italy, sacking Rome and establishing a brief *Visigothic* dominion. Burgundians and Franks

1 This battle is important as indicating the superiority of heavily armed cavalry over even well-trained infantry. Mediæval battles were to be mostly decided by the shock tactics of mounted knights, until the perfection, in the fourteenth century, of the long and cross bow.

entered into possession of Gaul. Vandals occupied Spain, and in 429 crossed over into Africa. Then followed the invasion of the Asiatic Huns, under Attila, the "scourge of God", threatening completely to submerge Roman civilisation, until deliverance came (451) at the decisive battle of Chalons.

The West was now entirely at the disposal of the generals of the Teutonic hosts. For a time they were content to exercise real power under the nominal sovereignty of a succession of impotent Cæsars. Finally, in 476, Odovakar deposed the insignificant Romulus Augustulus, intimating to the Emperor at Constantinople that the Empire was a re-united whole. The date is usually taken as that of the fall of the Empire in the West.

The Roman Empire, with its political and legal institutions, is the solid substructure upon which the later civilisation of western Europe has been built. It was no mere artificial attachment of communities, but an organic unity, merging distinctions of race, manners, and institutions in the idea of a common Roman citizenship. The conception of the unity of the western world was the most valuable of the legacies which Rome bequeathed to the Middle Ages. With the removal of the seat of Empire to Constantinople, the imperial idea was divorced from necessary connection with its historic centre, and the catastrophes which befell the city in the fifth century did not shake belief in its persistence. But, in the chaotic period of the barbarian invasions, the very idea of empire must have perished, had it not been for the glamour and veneration, which the Roman name still excited in the minds of the Teutonic peoples as a result of centuries of beneficent rule.[1]

1 Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire.*

It is, indeed, undeniable that grave defects existed in the policy and administration of the Empire after the commencement of the third century A.D. The conquered communities had been originally invested with a considerable degree of local autonomy. Not only had provincial assemblies been created and maintained; but the rights of the self-governing city had been perpetuated in the autonomous *municipium*. With the development of autocratic rule, however, these rights had been grievously circumscribed. The smallest details of local administration were required to be referred to Rome. Nor was individual freedom respected. The most damaging criticism of the imperial rule of Rome is that which draws attention to the shrinkage of free manhood under autocratic rule.

On the other hand, the preservation and extension of Romano-Hellenic civilisation was a necessary factor in the evolution of the modern world. It is to the long duration of the *pax romana*, and to Roman genius for organisation, that we owe this preservation. The philosophy, art, science and technical skill of the Greeks, and the peculiar Roman achievements in the realm of law, commerce and engineering, must have perished, had not Rome kept back the tide of barbarian invasion long enough to impress the Teutonic peoples with a sense of the greatness and utility of the imperial institutions. Moreover, the Empire had come to act as protector of the infant Christian Church, which was destined to be the heir of the imperial system, and to perform for mediæval Europe civilising functions of the profoundest significance.

CHAPTER V

The Middle Ages: Feudalism

THE mediæval period is that portion of the history of mankind which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire in the West and terminated some thousand years later in the movement known as the *Renaissance*. Its precise beginnings are indefinite, for the decline of the western half of the Empire was a slow process extending over not less than three centuries. Nor can any date be given for the passing away of mediæval conditions and the commencement of modern history. The truth is that history is a continuous process; and that its division into periods, however convenient it may be for purposes of study, involves an element of unreality. Mediæval civilisation was, in many respects, continuous with that of the Romano-Hellenic world. In the same way, modern society was a gradual evolution from the social world of the Middle Ages.

The traditional view of the Middle Ages represents society as stationary, and mediæval civilisation as unprogressive and barren of intellectual and artistic achievement. At first sight the centuries of the mediæval era appear to be an age of feudal oppression and general ignorance, separating two epochs of manifest progress in the arts of civilisation. Human initiative, it was argued, was held in bondage under the authority of the Church. When, in the fifth century, the Empire vanished from the West and the barbarians entered into possession, progress ceased. Learning and the arts were no longer

pursued. The central government was ineffective. Urban life declined. Roads were allowed to fall into disrepair. Society had manifestly become rough and turbulent, and the old civilisation appeared to have been obliterated. For some centuries the process of barbarisation continued. With each successive wave of barbarian invasion, confusion and disorder were deepened. The process culminated in the anarchy and feudal oppression of the tenth century.

It may be admitted that the earliest centuries of the mediæval period were almost barren of achievements making for the permanent progress of mankind. Civilisation was incomparably ruder. Disorder was universal. Even when the organisation of feudal society put a check to further invading movements, political society oscillated wildly between despotism and anarchy. Even this disorderly period, however, is of significance in the progressive development of humanity. The age was one of formation. Barbarian society, though rough, was full of new life and restless energy. The new races, with their fresh vigour and their receptive faculty, slowly learnt to amalgamate their institutions with those elements which they could appreciate in Roman civilisation. The ruin which followed the Roman collapse was consequently less fundamental than it appeared to be. A great deal vanished in the confusion of the period from the fifth to the eighth century; but much also survived. The deep respect which the barbarians entertained for the memory and institutions of Rome promised well for the future. Moreover, the Christian Church, which had inherited the universal position of the Empire in the West, early strove to convert and educate the Teutonic races. It was under the guidance of the Church that the latter

constructed the rude beginnings of what were to become powerful national organisations. In the sphere of culture, a home for scholarship and speculation was discovered in the monasteries. It would indeed be long before the new peoples of the West would be able fully to enter into the inheritance of Romano-Hellenic civilisation; but so early as the eleventh century, the reconstruction of the political, economic and social order of society had been begun on a sound basis of monarchical rule and agricultural prosperity. With the recovery, at the Renaissance, of much that had been temporarily lost, the work of the Middle Ages may be said to have been completed.[1]

The notable gains of the mediæval era fall mainly within the period of the eleventh century to the fourteenth. The eleventh century witnessed a significant renaissance in commerce and industry. This development assisted the monarchs to construct the foundations of an administrative system; and to weld into some semblance of organic national unity the scattered feudal fiefs. The legal renaissance of the succeeding century forwarded these efforts to a still greater degree. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were significant epochs in the development of European civilisation. The idea of nationality took root then. Parliament, the jury system, and the circuit judges were important developments. Universities sprung up. Gothic architecture expressed the religious aspirations of mediæval man and the richness of mediæval life. At the same time, art, which had been almost wholly religious, was revived in the secular sphere. Effort was original and creative. Even in the realm of science, the thirteenth century

1 G. B. Adams, *Civilisation during the Middle Ages*, esp. ch. XVIII.

produced in Roger Bacon an enquirer who possessed the true scientific spirit.

The many-sided foundations of modern civilisation are thus to be traced to the mediæval period. Modern political society is based on the self-sufficient national state. The Middle Ages cherished the conception of a universal Christian society. Firm belief in the essential unity of Christendom was a characteristic feature of mediæval thought. We must trace briefly the attempts which were made to express this ideal in international institutions.

The disappearance of the Empire in the West left the Roman Church sole heir of the imperial system. Its early constitution had been very largely an imitation of the machinery of the secular government. Hence, it was natural that the Church should feel itself materially weakened by the collapse of the authority, under the shelter of which it had achieved widespread organisation. Spiritual unity seemed incomplete without some measure of central direction in secular affairs also. Moreover, the very independence of the Church was in danger of overthrow, unless it could summon to its assistance some ruler invested with the duty of protecting its integrity and enforcing its spiritual decisions.

The ideal of a single, all-embracing empire, however, remained a mere aspiration until, towards the close of the eighth century, a wide dominion over western Europe came to be consolidated by the Frank Charlemagne. Alone of the Teutonic invaders of the West, the Franks had achieved a permanent and stable polity, partly because they had retained a measure of compact organisation, in close touch with the original nucleus of their power; partly as a consequence of their early acceptance

(496) of Catholic Christianity. In the intervening centuries, their territories had shown a tendency to disintegrate; but the new *Carolingian* dynasty, significantly enthroned (751) with papal sanction, was strong enough to consolidate the scattered domains of the Franks, and to overthrow the power of the Lombards in Italy, which for long had been the chief obstacle to the carrying into effect of the papal policy. Finally, by his extensive conquests, Charlemagne achieved something approaching the unity of Christendom: and it was recognition of this fact, as well as appreciation of the valuable services which Charlemagne, as patron and protector, might perform for the Holy See, which moved Leo III to place the crown of the Cæsars on the Frank king's head in the basilica of St Peter on Christmas Day of the year A.D. 800.

This was in no true sense a revival of the Empire in the West. It purported to be the transference of the seat of undivided Empire from Constantinople to Rome, at a moment of vacancy arising from the deposition of Constantine VI. In reality, the Empire of Charlemagne and his successors had no good claim to be considered the heir of the Roman Imperial system. Charlemagne was indeed little more than ruler of extensive but ill-co-ordinated dominions, held together by essentially personal ties, and governed by forms which did no more than faintly resemble the methods of Imperial Rome.

His Empire nevertheless stood for orderly government and the principles of Christianity; and achieved not merely internal order but a brief revival of letters. The ablest of mediæval rulers, on the other hand, could do little, in the face of the insuperable difficulty of defective communications, to make government respected in the outlying districts. There was as yet no active town

life and scarcely any commerce. Even security of settled life was absent in the chaotic period of fierce Hungarian and Scandinavian invasion which swept across Europe in the century following Charlemagne's death. The gradual dissolution of the Frank territories was the inevitable consequence of these conditions. The need of the times was local defence and local government. Territorial disintegration was the necessary prelude to effective local organisation. Towards the close of the ninth century, the dominions of Charlemagne fell apart into three main groups—*East Frankland*, shortly to become the kingdom of Germany; *Lotharingia*, composed of the ancient Burgundian kingdom, the lower Rhine lands and the northern half of Italy, and the more compact territory of the *West Franks*, from which was to emerge the mediæval kingdom of France.

The persistence of the imperial idea is no doubt to be attributed to the success, albeit temporary, of Charlemagne in restoring unity to the Christian world. The memory of this achievement in the tenth century, stimulated the German Otto to bring about "a second revival" of the Empire in the West, this time with a distinctive title—*Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation*. The Empire was thus to be associated with one kingdom and one people; and very soon the German king came to be regarded as having a prescriptive right to be crowned Emperor. Though more compact than that of Charlemagne, it could scarcely claim to be either Roman or universal. Very soon, indeed, it ceased to exercise any very significant influence over the development of the western nations, and came to involve no more than a vague feudal overlordship.

In marked contrast to the Mediæval Empire, the

Papacy was a truly universal institution. Its international authority, though professedly confined to the spiritual sphere, could readily be made effective in all departments of human action. In every country of western Europe, the Church could mobilise a hierarchy of normally obedient officials, devoted to her service and composed of men of the shrewdest intelligence. Whereas the Empire rested on vague Roman traditions and on feudal claims obnoxious to national and princely interests, the Papacy wielded an authority that was both popular and universally conceded. Its spiritual weapons of *interdict* and *excommunication* were almost as much dreaded in the castles of kings as in the cottages of the peasants. Should conflict arise between the twin heads of Christian society, the victory of the Pope was, in the long run, inevitable, owing to universal belief in his power to open or to close the portals of the next world.

Under Charlemagne and Otto, the Papacy had indeed adopted a submissive tone. Its early inability to control the local factions of the city of Rome was only slowly remedied; and it was not until the eleventh century that the Papacy asserted, and maintained by force of arms, its claim to complete independence of the secular authority. The early conflict centred round the appointment of spiritual officers; but the impossibility of entirely separating spiritual from lay matters, and so marking out the respective spheres of jurisdiction, was bound ultimately to issue in a struggle for supremacy. This struggle is the chief episode of the Middle Ages; and its conclusion was rapidly followed by the passing of mediæval conditions. Defeat left the Emperor no more than German king, and even as such, owing to the lavish grants of jurisdiction which successive monarchs had

made, in the hope of rallying support, his authority was closely circumscribed by the growing independence of the princes. The Papacy, nominally victorious, had in reality weakened the basis of its own power by its long-sustained conflict with the lay Empire. In the fourteenth century it was to suffer grievous humiliation at the hands of the French monarchy.

We have seen that citizenship in ancient times was identifiable with political and civil rights in an organised community. The modern state is a larger and more comprehensive territorial unity but it resembles the city state of the Greeks and Romans in that there exists some sovereign authority able, in the last resort, to enforce obedience. By way of contrast, nearly all the government that was effective in the Middle Ages was local government. Rights and obligations depended upon landholding. The central government was seldom able to enforce its decisions. In any conflict, the local authority was almost certain to prevail. For several centuries, we hear very little of the state, with its machinery of administration. The life of the ordinary individual was moulded by that strange collection of rules and practices which is commonly termed *feudalism*.

Feudalism is a state of society based upon the ownership and occupation of land. It makes rights and duties a matter of contract between man and man, rather than of subjection to the law of the state. It is thus both personal and territorial: personal in that it rests on the contractual obligations of individuals; territorial in so far as the basis of each contract is normally the possession of land. It is an organisation of society midway between the patriarchal stage, and that of the modern, territorial state.

Broadly speaking, feudalism is not peculiar to mediæval Europe, but is found, in its essential features, wherever powers of government are exercised by landowners in virtue of their occupation of land. Ancient Egypt (for several centuries) and modern Japan present parallel developments. The historical feudalism, however, is that which had its origin in the period succeeding the barbarian invasions. It is characterised by what is called the *dismemberment of property*.

The notion that property was divisible, and that various rights could be enjoyed over the same piece of land by different persons, made it possible for a landowner to grant an estate or interest in land, whilst retaining certain rights over that land. This process came to be known as *enfeoffment*. The king, as supreme landowner, granted estates to persons termed *tenants-in-chief* to hold under him for stipulated services. Tenants-in-chief similarly granted portions of their estates to men who became their tenants, or *vassals*, on like conditions. The interest granted was technically called a *fee*; and the creation of fees, or *subinfeudation* as it was termed, might be carried to almost any lengths. At the bottom of the feudal ladder were the actual occupants of the soil—the *tenants-in-demesne*. Except for this last group and for the king, every landowner was thus both lord and vassal, society reposing on recognition of mutual obligations.

Feudalism may be traced back to its origin in the obscure period following the first invasions of the Teutonic tribes. It arose from originally isolated institutions and practices, some of which were purely Teutonic, whilst others were certainly Roman.

Not necessarily first in point of time was the practice, to which the word *precarium* came to be applied, whereby

men who were prepared to cultivate the soil received grants of land on condition of performing services or rendering specified payments. In view of the increasing shortage of agricultural labour, this device was welcomed by Roman landowners as the readiest available means of getting their land cultivated. As time went on, however, the tenant came to be regarded as the legitimate owner provided he performed the services agreed upon.

At very much the same time, it was becoming the practice for individuals to seek protection by *commending* themselves to some Church or wealthy landowner. Though the relationship, in such cases, was personal, the tendency was for land to enter into the arrangement. In the case of the *beneficium*, on the other hand, land was the essence of the contract, whilst the initiative came from above. In the centuries following the downfall of the Empire in the West, owing to the extreme scarcity of money, it became necessary to remunerate public officials by permitting them to appropriate for their own use the revenues of certain domains; and the practice was slowly adopted by private landowners for much the same reasons.

It was not until the tenth century, however, that these somewhat fragmentary arrangements were transformed into the complicated institutions of feudal society. The primary impulse came from the renewed invasions of Scandinavians, Saracens, and Hungarians, producing a state of disorder and rapine which the central government was utterly powerless to remedy. Gradually, in all parts of the West, kings came to recognise their impotence to dispense justice and organise the public security. Extensive grants of immunity from the jurisdiction of the royal officers tended to sever the

connection between the king's palace and the outlying districts. A further step towards feudalism was taken when kings began to acquiesce in the principle that the landowner, as such, had a right to establish a court and exercise governmental rights over his tenants. The landowner, on his part, ceased to be content with the *benefice* which gave him no more than a life interest, without power of alienation. The king was compelled to recognise the principle of hereditary succession. Finally, the discovery that heavily armed cavalry was indispensable for success in warfare led to the endowment of *knights* with sufficient land to furnish the means for their equipment.

Feudalism thus came into existence as a military measure to organise local defence; economically, to safeguard cultivation of the soil; and politically, to provide machinery for local administration of justice.

The basis of the feudal relationship was the *fief*, which was not, however, in every case land. The right to enjoy certain revenues, or the tenure of an office, would also be reckoned as a *fief*, for which its holder would engage to perform certain services. The nature of these duties was not exactly specified, and varied according to local custom. In general, it may be said, the tenant by *knight-service* was bound to protect his lord's interests, and to aid him in counsel. Certain definite obligations were also imposed, chief of which was the military service of himself and possibly others with him, for a specified term each year, attendance at the lord's court, and payment of certain customary aids. His land was also burdened with obligations collectively known as *incidents of tenure*. Under this head come the lord's profitable rights of *wardship* and *marriage*. A new heir would be called upon to pay a sum equivalent to one year's revenue

of the estate, as a *relief* on succession to the fief. On the other hand, the lord undertook to afford his vassal just treatment, and protection in the enjoyment of his fief.

It must not be supposed that feudalism was organised on any consistent plan over the countries of western Europe. Theoretically, the rule *no land without a lord* would have covered Europe with a network of fiefs, from that of the great baron holding directly of the king to the smallest manor of the tenant in *socage*. Such an organisation was never achieved outside the short-lived crusading states of Asia Minor and Palestine. In all countries, a certain amount of non-feudal, *allodial* land remained throughout the Middle Ages. Least of all was there any regularity in the feudal relationship. Individual manors were frequently held directly of the king. The same piece of land would commonly be held as an estate by several men of different tenures, though only one could hold *in demesne*. Moreover, it was by no means uncommon for the king to hold particular manors as a tenant of one of his own vassals. Feudal theory and feudal practice thus tended to diverge.

Hitherto, we have dealt exclusively with *freehold* land. Sharply contrasted with freehold was *villein* tenure. Villeins (*villani*) made up the most numerous class of those who actually cultivated the soil. They were, for the most part, outside the benefits of feudalism. The services which they performed were considered to be servile in nature. But, in order to understand their condition, it will be necessary briefly to trace the development of agriculture prior to the appearance of the mediæval manor.

The probability that agriculture was practised in some parts of Europe so early as the neolithic age has been

indicated in the opening chapter. Wheat, oats and barley may have grown wild in parts abundantly supplied with rainfall and sunshine. The relative laboriousness of agriculture, however, would militate against its general adoption, until population began to press upon the means of subsistence. Then, the discovery would be made that agriculture, with its greater returns, afforded a prospect of increased wealth.

The earliest form of agriculture was, no doubt, the cropping of forest clearings, the same plot being sown year after year, until the *law of diminishing fertility* operated to produce entire barrenness. This is known as *extensive* cultivation, and involves the constant migration of the community. The discovery that land would recover its fertility if allowed to lie fallow for a time led to improved methods, and to a more settled form of life.[1]

The original settlement in villages would be largely determined by geographical circumstances. The problem of security would be a very real one, making a strong defensive position an obvious desirability. Even more urgent was the economic stress which made agriculture impossible unless an adequate supply of winter feed could be raised for the cattle used in ploughing. Grass crops would be most easily obtained from cultivation of alluvial plains; and it is consequently in proximity to such land that villages tended to grow up. In most cases, the valuable meadow was probably split up into allotments every spring; but the arable land came to be permanently divided into individual holdings. Common cultivation was the rule, as few, if any, men had sufficient

1 Land is now known not to require a rest; and the same crop may be taken from a field for very many years, provided the plant food be replenished by suitable manuring.

oxen to plough their land unaided.[1] A desire for equality and fair play probably dictated the minute division of the arable into narrow strips of normally one acre, and the rule that each man's holding must consist of strips scattered over the fields and not lying together. In this way all would share alike in fertile and relatively barren land.

Mediæval man knew little of the nature of the soil, and of the processes of agriculture; but he early discovered that a systematic change of crops produced the best results. He was not acquainted with the root crops and artificial grasses, which check exhaustion by restoring nitrogen to the soil; but he was not slow to find out that certain rotations, such as wheat, barley, fallow, or oats, beans, fallow, could be profitably employed. He was then forced to consider the possibility of an improved arrangement of the common fields.

Under what is called the *infield and outfield system*, the villagers had been accustomed to use a single field for a systematic rotation; and to fall back on the *outfield* for an occasional crop, when the fertility of the former was temporarily exhausted. From this arrangement, it was no more than a short step to the *two-field system*, under which one of two fields was cropped in each alternate year, and the other left fallow. This, however, had the disadvantage of not permitting much variety of crop, and was clearly less economical than the *three-field system*, with its greater total returns and the possibility of having more than one crop growing at the same time. Nor was

1 Individual cultivation of compact holdings, however, was by no means uncommon even so early as the twelfth century, in the case of land reclaimed from the waste, or where new regions were being opened up by colonisation.

a greater amount of ploughing involved, since the land left fallow in each year required to be ploughed twice; and was only one-third in the case of the three-field system, as compared with one-half of the arable, where the arrangement was on the two-field basis. Nevertheless, the two-field system was only slowly abandoned; and it is significant that it was nearly universal in Lincolnshire down to the close of the twelfth century.

The origins of the agricultural village of mediæval times are lost in obscurity. Some of its typical arrangements, as we have seen, suggest the careful promotion of equality among a group of free tribesfolk. Yet, the historical *manor* is nearly everywhere found to be dependent on the authority of some lord. How can we account for the presence of the lord of the manor?

Much of what has already been said on the subject of the growth of feudal lordship in the troubled period of the ninth and tenth centuries will suggest a general line of explanation. Kings found it more convenient to look to the great landowners, both for performance of the functions of local justice, and for the supply of horsemen needed to repel the invasions of the Danes and other enemies. The villagers on their part preferred a condition of dependence on a local lord to constant liability to personal military service. At the same time, the pressure of taxation or of economic misfortune would force many to enter into a relationship of dependence.

However the process may have originated, the typical manor of the Middle Ages is a unit embracing both free and unfree tenure. Free tenure is that which we have briefly described—the holding of land in fee (or rarely for life) on specific feudal conditions. Unfree tenure is, strictly speaking, not tenure at all. The land belonged

to the lord; and the villein, or other unfree person, could be legally ejected at any moment. Though not free, on the other hand, he was by no means rightless. In practice, he would be protected, in his holding, by the custom of the manor. He could not bring a civil action against his lord; but the latter, in England at least, could be made to answer in the king's court for any injury to life and limb.

Very frequently, the manor was coterminous with the *vill*, or village. The tenants lived in houses grouped round the church and the village green. The cultivated fields stretched out in all directions, each divided into *shotts*, or furlongs, which in turn were subdivided into acre, or half-*acre*, strips. Beyond the arable, lay the meadow and the permanent pasture, and beyond that again the woodland and the waste, stretching to the confines of adjacent manors.

In England, the normal holding of the villein was the *virgate* (about 30 acres), though occasionally as much as 120 acres, a *hide*, or even more, is recorded. A hide appears to have been the unit thought necessary for the upkeep of a full plough-team of eight oxen. The acres lay scattered here and there in the common fields of the village, unploughed *balks* being left between each pair of adjacent strips. The plough would be taken up one strip, usually a furlong (that is, *furrowlong*) in length, turned on the *headland*, and driven down the next. There were no hedges, though temporary fences were erected to prevent the cattle straying over the crops. Even the lord's demesne was commonly made up of such scattered strips, and cultivated by the same methods as the land of the customary tenants.

The meadow land was similarly divided up, with or

without annual re-allotment. Every villein would be entitled to a share proportionate to his holding of arable. Until the hay crop had been taken, all the land was carefully enclosed. Rights of common pasturage existed over the permanent pasture; and of *turbary* (turf-cutting) and *pannage* (feeding swine on acorns) over the waste and woodland attached to the manor.

On the European Continent, the manorial system was, generally speaking, much more oppressive. The *free villein*, indeed, was, in many parts, subject to fixed payments and services only. Unfree, or servile, tenure, on the other hand, involved liability to unrestricted *tallages*, and to the hated *capitation*, or poll, tax. All customary tenants, whether personally free or not, were normally subject to seigneurial rights and monopolies, to forced labour (*corvée*), to feudal justice and to private tolls. Only too frequently they were the helpless prey of unscrupulous feudal barons. Even in England, there was a strong tendency for the relatively free villein to be dragged down to the status of a serf. As such, he might be sold with the land; and his chattels were held to belong absolutely to the lord.

On the other hand, it was not in the lord's interest unduly to oppress his unfree tenant. The latter could claim not only protection, but sustenance in time of hardship. In practice, his heir was entitled to succeed to the holding on payment of a *heriot*, usually his best beast. Moreover, there were many ways in which a villein could better his position. Agricultural services could be *commuted* into money payments; a portion of the waste could be reclaimed and rented as a free holding; or, occasionally, there might arise the opportunity for the renting of the freehold of the demesne by the villeins

as a whole. The law tended to treat him as a freeman in relation to everyone but his lord. In England, he could bear arms, and dispose by will of his personal chattels. In the twelfth century, he was called upon to bear his share of the burden of taxation.

It is easy to condemn many aspects of feudal society. From the point of view of the state, it threatened dissolution. Monarchy tended to be restricted to the functions of overlordship. Sovereignty passed into the hands of countless feudal barons. Allegiance became a matter of contract—a contract, moreover, that it was peculiarly easy to repudiate, since the baron could, generally speaking, call upon his vassals to support him against his lord. Such a system inevitably promoted appeal to force, and, where the monarchy was unusually weak, open anarchy resulted. Even the astute Hohenstaufen[1] failed to maintain their authority in conflict with feudal independence.

Locally, feudalism exposed the non-freeholding classes to grave risk of oppression. The condition of the serf too frequently became one of abject misery. The prevalence of private warfare and private justice involved the negation of good government and of personal security.

Nevertheless, feudalism was capable of being interpreted in such a way as would neither deny sovereign rights to the monarch, nor expose the subject to the miseries of baronial oppression. In Normandy and England, the doctrine prevailed that all military service was owed to the king, and that allegiance to him outweighed the duty of obedience to the immediate lord.

1 Members of the Hohenstaufen family were rulers of Germany and of the mediæval Empire, 1138–1254.

At the same time, the rights of the king, as suzerain, were greatly, even unwarrantably, extended. There was nothing really incompatible between feudalism and a strong monarchy.

What is the significance of feudalism in the progressive development of western civilisation? The most favourable standpoint is that which indicates the progress of agriculture and rural industry. Vast tracts of abandoned land were brought under cultivation. Whatever its demerits, feudalism did succeed in organising local defence and thus safeguarding those engaged in the cultivation of the soil. Moreover, it bound men together under a system of reciprocal rights and duties. "The lord", pronounces the mediæval jurist Beaumanoir, "is quite as much bound to be faithful to his man, as the latter is bound in regard to his lord".

Finally, there is an aspect of feudalism which clearly made for progress. Feudalism looked forward to the final development of the state, not merely in the new organisation of local life which it provided, but in the discovery of a new cohesive, centripetal, force. It consecrated, and, in the institutions of *chivalry*, made universal, the spiritual bond of loyalty—a force of cohesion which was of incalculable value in welding together the modern state.

CHAPTER VI

The Middle Ages: Monasticism and Architecture

THE noble ruins of mediæval monasteries bear witness to the collective devotion and serene hope of mediæval man at his best. Though inspired by the religious ideals of saintly founders, the monasteries were essentially the product of the co-operation of all classes. The wealth of the baron was freely poured out in the pious duty of building or endowing monastic houses; and even the poorer folk were touched by the tide of enthusiasm. In all countries of western Europe, monasteries were extraordinarily numerous, exercising profound influence over mediæval society.

Monasticism is generally considered to be of eastern origin, and immemorial antiquity. Centuries before Christianity, the life of religious seclusion appears to have enjoyed a certain popularity in the East; and to have been based on two distinguishable conceptions. The first was the ideal of the solitary life in converse with God—an ideal which, carried to its logical conclusion, involved entire separation of the individual from intercourse with his fellow-men. The second was the theory of asceticism—the conclusion that an earnest spiritual life was only possible for the man who had altogether suppressed the natural human appetites, and achieved an attitude of entire indifference to material suffering and misfortune. This subjection of self was not merely the necessary condition without which there could be no

true communion with God, but an act of positive religious merit. Thus, the greater the mortification of the flesh, the greater the holiness thereby achieved.

These contentions were never admitted in their entirety by the Christian Church. Christian monasticism begins in the third and fourth centuries A.D., through the efforts of individual hermits forming communities living under a systematised rule. The entirely solitary life exercised no strong appeal in the West. Mediæval man was too sociable to endure the existence of the hermit. The *Carthusians* were the only order which enjoined a solitary life within the community. Asceticism, on the other hand, appealed strongly, a somewhat sombre outlook on life being characteristic of mediæval thought. The world was regarded as hopelessly sinful; and the duty of the Church was to stand apart from, and avoid contamination by, the wickedness of lay society. Such was the conception of Gregory VII, perhaps the greatest of mediæval popes. The Church was not, indeed, heedless of the state of depravity of the lay world. The function of the Church Universal was to re-spiritualise society, by upholding righteousness, and maintaining the moral law. It was the peculiar task of the monasteries to set an example of godly living; and to impress upon worldly men the possibility of a higher life, in communion with God.

Thus, on the one hand, religious-minded men in increasing numbers came to withdraw themselves from the world, in order to live the true Christian life: whilst, on the other, kings and barons began to endow monasteries, performing thereby acts of unquestioned religious merit.

From the first, the conversion of the heathen and the edification of lay society in general were indicated as

the legitimate task of the monasteries, involving some sacrifice of the ideal of seclusion in the interests of the surrounding community. To these functions were gradually added others, as the policy of the Church or the standpoint of particular founders might dictate. From the point of view of the Papacy, the monasteries were the trusted local representatives of the Holy See, exempted in consequence from episcopal jurisdiction and made subject to the Pope's immediate control. It was on account of their stricter discipline and intellectual superiority that the *regulars* were thus preferred to the *secular* clergy, the lower ranks of which were largely recruited from among men of villein status. Particular orders were distinguished by the direction of the everyday activities of their members along certain emphasised paths. Thus, the *Cistercians* were enjoined to settle in remote and undeveloped districts and to apply themselves to the reclamation of wastes and the improvement of agriculture.

The great legislator of monastic history was St Benedict of Nursia (d. 542), whose *rule* for the most part superseded all others. This rule prescribed manual labour, confinement of the monk to the precincts of the monastery, frequent prayer and the taking of the three major vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Minor provisions strictly regulated the daily life of the *Benedictine* monk, and were mostly of an ascetic nature. Flesh food, for example, was definitely prohibited.

The history of monasticism is largely an account of successive revivals of monastic zeal and discipline, each movement gradually spending its force and being succeeded by a period of fairly general relaxation. This fact suggests that monasticism, as interpreted by St Bene-

dict, made too heavy a demand on human nature. The conclusion that the monastic life was fundamentally inappropriate as a remedy for the ills of society was, however, never accepted, or even seriously entertained by mediæval thinkers. Successive reformers invariably fell back on stricter disciplinary regulation, and more strenuous insistence on the isolation of the monk from the surrounding world. The Benedictine system had been essentially mild. Asceticism had never been carried to extravagant lengths; and a wide discretion had been permitted to abbots in administering the rule. By the tenth century, the order had become firmly established in France, England, Italy, Spain and Germany, though not without a certain relaxation of the original standard of discipline. In the eyes of the more spiritually minded of the clerics of the eleventh century, mildness had degenerated into dangerous laxity. So early as 909, the *Cluniac* order had been established with the purpose of reviving austere Benedictinism, reliance being placed on centralisation of control and co-ordination of effort. Between 1020 and 1120, no less than eight new orders were founded, the most important of which were the Carthusian (1084) and the Cistercian (1098). Founded mainly as a protest against what was held to be the comfortable, if not luxurious, *régime* of the Benedictines, these new orders aimed at restoration of the primitive strictness of monastic life. Within the houses of the Carthusians, the monks were to be separately accommodated in cells, and to live a solitary life of manual labour and spiritual devotion. The Cistercians, on the other hand, were enjoined to dedicate themselves, in the intervals between their devotional duties, to important economic work for the community.

The eleventh and twelfth centuries were the great age of monastic progress. The salvation of society was sought by means of a regenerated Church, and regeneration was to come through the monastic training of the clergy as a whole, secular as well as regular. Discipline within organised communities was prescribed as the panacea for the ills of mediæval man. Monasticism was thus regarded with universal admiration as the chief source of spiritual hope for mankind. With all classes, the monasteries became immensely popular. In backward regions, they formed the most potent civilising influence. Elsewhere, they performed a great work for lay society, serving in particular as a visible reminder of the claims of the life spiritual.

By the commencement of the thirteenth century, however, these reformed movements had spent their force. From the first, monasticism had contained the seeds of decay. Only the exceptional man was capable of carrying out its strictest ideals. Consequently, extension of numbers, due to popularity, was bound to lead to relaxation of rule.

Nevertheless, in any survey of the rise and decline of mediæval monasticism, it is essential to bear in mind the great variety of monastic conditions; and widespread significance must not be attributed to evidence drawn from particular cases.

So far as there was a general movement towards abandonment of the stricter Benedictine prescriptions, this decline was brought about, or at least accelerated, by the greatest of all mediæval calamities—the Black Death, 1347–9. In the early years of the fourteenth century, indeed, enthusiasm had begun to diminish. Few new monasteries had been founded, whilst, in the older

houses, efforts to maintain numbers had not been altogether successful. The Black Death dealt a blow from which the monastic movement as a whole never recovered. Some communities were almost annihilated. Very few, after the pestilence, could work their estates, except by hired labour. At the time of the suppression of the monasteries, the largest Benedictine house in the eastern counties (Bury St Edmunds) contained no more than, approximately, sixty monks.

The good work performed by the monasteries for mediæval civilisation has been incidentally mentioned. Apart from the spiritual and moral uplifting of society, we have seen that the monasteries rendered valuable services in the settlement and colonisation of remote districts, introduced improved methods of agriculture and industry, and kept alive the pursuit of knowledge and culture. Nor must the charitable and educational work of the monks be forgotten. It was part of their duty to relieve distress, and to succour the poor and infirm, a special officer, the almoner, being appointed to supervise charity. The sick could be accommodated in the almonry, outdoor relief might be granted at the almoner's discretion, whilst doles to paupers were sometimes made at the gates of the monastery. The amount of relief given, however, showed a distinct falling-off after the Black Death, partly due to mismanagement of estates, and consequently straitened resources. Nor was the system a satisfactory one. There was no co-ordination of effort either with the parochial system of relief, or with that of other monasteries. The relief given was merely *casual*, without hope of permanently alleviating the condition of the recipient.

The educational work of the monasteries was im-

portant in a period when educational facilities were almost non-existent. A number of monastic schools were maintained, usually for the sons of gentry, but it was no part of the duty of the monasteries to teach the laity. The actual instruction was performed by a schoolmaster, paid by the monks. Within the monasteries, education was, generally speaking, given only to those who intended to become monks.

Monasticism may be criticised on the ground of its defective social standpoint. It took little heed of the natural world with its responsibilities. The monks were a class apart, living in privileged corporations which administered a considerable portion of the wealth of European countries. Their strength and ingrained conservatism, in course of time, came to impose a powerful barrier to progress.[1] By the fourteenth century, mediæval society had begun to outgrow the need for monasticism.

Sharply contrasted with the monks in social outlook were the mediæval orders of *friars*. In the early thirteenth century, the great mendicant revivals, associated with the names of St Francis (d. 1226) and St Dominic (d. 1221), gave a new direction to religious and social effort. The friar was not to be confined to the precincts of a monastic house; but was to go about among the common people, ministering to their spiritual and material needs. Not merely individual, but also corporate poverty was enjoined. Preaching was to be practised, though book learning was originally disparaged. The *Dominicans*, however, from the first, devoted their

1 This statement is subject to some qualification. Some monasteries were most efficiently managed so late as the fifteenth century, and remained chief centres of population and industry.

attention to education; and became the most active and influential teachers in the universities.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the friars were immensely popular. They were not monks—indeed, a considerable number were laymen. Entirely lacking in the spiritual pride of the more worldly-minded of the clergy, the friar had a simple and practical purpose in life—the consolation of the poor. It was the *Franciscans* who first made religion a personal and individual possession for mediæval man.

There are few subjects more significant for the historian of civilisation than architecture. The religion and thought of an age are expressed in the form and detail of its characteristic buildings. The fervour of the crusading movement enters into the noble churches of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. National calamity, defeat in war, or perhaps some great pestilence, on the other hand, brings in its train disillusionment and lethargy. Decline of architecture inevitably follows. In broad outline, then, the ups and downs of human progress may be discerned, and the characteristic aspirations of successive epochs interpreted, from a study of architectural styles.

Primitive building was handicapped by the nature of the available tools. Flints set in wooden handles were all that were accessible when first man became dissatisfied with the caves and tree-dwellings of the stone period. Gradually other tools were introduced, first copper and later iron being employed.

Building with shaped blocks of stone appears to have begun at very much the same time in Egypt, Crete, and the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. Egyptian archi-

tecture embodied the principle of the *lintel-and-post*, or *trabeated*, form of construction. Doors were crowned by placing a flat beam, tile or stone block (the *lintel*) across two upright posts. A primitive type of arch was also evolved. Lintel construction is, however, characteristic of Egyptian work. Roofs were consequently flat.

The pre-eminence of the Greeks in architecture and sculpture is partly to be explained by geological facts. Marble suitable for the sculptor's art existed in abundance, and began to replace the porous limestone previously used in Greek building towards the close of the sixth century. The Romans, on the other hand, often had to make the best of stone. The chief feature of Greek work is the beautiful external ornamentation, especially the marvellous perfection of sculptural imagery. At the same time, the effect is produced very largely by perfect proportion and by the extensive employment of graceful curved lines.

The Romans were superior in adaptability, though their buildings lacked the noble solemnity and perfection of detail of the Greek temples. There is a certain masterfulness and sense of permanence in Roman work. Their notable contribution to architectural progress was the introduction of the *arched vault*,[1] formed by crossing arched ribs of brick or stone and cementing the interspaces. This made it easy to add upper storeys, which could be supported by the vaults, much better than by the architraves of the lintel-and-post construction. The Romans occasionally employed concrete vaults as roofs.

Out of the Roman style there developed in the early Middle Ages what is known as the *Romanesque*. In reality, this was a compound of Roman, Byzantine and

1 Perhaps borrowed from the Etruscans.

Teutonic styles. The Roman *basilica*, or law court, with its double row of arches and *apsidal* end, became the model for the early Christian churches.

In England, to which we shall in the main confine our attention, two Romanesque periods are usually distinguished—the *Anglo-Saxon* and the *Norman*. Roman influences, however, were not so noticeable in Anglo-Saxon England, as in the countries of the European Continent at the same period. The mission of St Augustine was no more than a partial success; and it was from the Celtic Church of Ireland and Northumbria that Christianity spread over England. There are few remains of Anglo-Saxon churches on the basilican plan. The Celtic church, with its transepts and rectangular presbytery, is much more general. The turned *balusters* in the belfry windows are, however, an imitation of Roman pillars. Other features of Saxon work are the narrow *deeply splayed* windows, built to admit light but not rain, and *long and short work* at the angles.[1] The semi-circular arch is frequently found, though windows and doors are occasionally triangular headed.

Saxon churches were mostly timber-framed; and, over considerable tracts of England, were altogether destroyed in the period of the Danish invasions. The Normans almost invariably used stone. The vaulting of wide spaces with semi-circular arches, however, presented great difficulties, Norman vaulting being for the most part clumsy and insecure. Flat ceilings of wooden beams were consequently preferred, and vaults used merely for aisles and narrow passages.

The effect produced by Norman buildings is one of severity and massiveness, which may be said to symbolise

1 *Quoin* stones placed alternately horizontally and vertically.

Norman hardness of character and love of justice. In Norman churches, pillars are low and massive, arches heavy and round-headed, with the simplest ornamentation (the *zigzag*, or *chevron*) and windows small and narrow.

The earliest Norman castles were probably little more than wood stockades. The permanent structures built for the security of the Conqueror's garrisons, on the other hand, were rectangular keeps usually three storeys high and built with walls of great thickness. The only staircase was external to the building, whilst windows were little more than narrow slots placed high up for purposes of security. Store rooms and quarters for the men-at-arms occupied the ground floor, the hall with its daïs the first floor, and the *solar* of the baron and his family the storey above. The whole keep was surrounded by a palisaded court, or *bailey*, in which the kitchen, offices, and stabling were situated. Later, stone was invariably used for the walls of the bailey, and a gate-house with *portcullis* and *drawbridge* added, whilst projecting towers enabled the defending archers to shoot along the external face of the wall. The keep might be protected by a further wall enclosing a bailey within the main bailey. The well was, of course, situated within the keep.

We can trace the process of the pacification of England in the gradual evolution of the domestic residence. From the twelfth-century keep, the transition is to the fortified manor house, and finally the manor house ceases to be a fortification. In the fourteenth century, comfort could be studied. Wide, mullioned and glazed windows came into fashion. Floors were no longer beaten earth, covered with rushes, but were frequently tiled. Additional

rooms for the comfort of the family and their guests were provided; and wide, ornamental timber staircases communicated with the upper storeys.

Improvement in the cottages of the poorer folk indicates a corresponding rise in the standard of comfort. The eleventh-century villein had lived in a two-roomed cottage of timber and mud, with no chimney and only canvas cloth stretched across the window openings. The *copyholder*[1] of the fourteenth century would be much more comfortably accommodated. His windows would boast of horn, if not glass. Chimneys had come into general use. Furniture was less rudimentary.

Romanesque architecture imperceptibly shaded into *Gothic*. Grace and slenderness replaced massivity. Gothic architecture is characterised by the beauty of its vertical lines, expressing the energy and delight and symbolising the devotional aspirations of mediæval builders. Steep gables, towers with pinnacles and spires, lofty pillars and slender, mullioned windows give a soaring grace to Gothic buildings. Internally, elegant ornamentation adds a beautiful finish to the stone work without obscuring the symmetry of the general plan.

Practical considerations had dictated some revision of the building methods of the later Romanesque period. The Normans had failed satisfactorily to solve the difficulty of vaulting the naves of their churches. The semi-circular arch was fundamentally unsuitable, as diagonal ribs of this shape are necessarily higher than

1 Copyhold is land held on conditions recorded in the court roll of the manor. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most villeins converted their tenure into copyhold, which normally involved money payments only, by way of rent.

the arches above the sides. The *pointed* arch,[1] on the other hand, could be made as wide as required without altering the height. Moreover, the thrust was less than in the case of semi-circular arches, and could easily be counteracted by *flying buttresses* above the roofs of the aisles. The architects of the new style thus achieved a perfectly stable equilibrium of force even when vaulting the widest spaces.

At the same time, the Normans had been extravagant in their use of stone. The Gothic builders found that lighter piers could be employed without any sacrifice of strength, so long as the walls were suitably supported by buttresses.

English mediæval Gothic architecture is divided into three main periods—the *Early English*, the *Decorated*, and the *Perpendicular*.

The Early English style reached its maturity in the thirteenth century. The buildings assumed a loftier and at the same time a more graceful aspect. The simple devotion and self-repression of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries appear to be expressed in the Early English churches. At the same time, the general plan had come to be affected by the tendencies of mediæval thought. The movement sharply to separate the Church from the state, and to preserve the clergy from too close contact with the lay world found expression in the erection of screens to shut off the enlarged choir from the nave and transepts. The thirteenth-century passion for variety found an outlet in the beautiful finish imparted to arches

1 Though the pointed arch was only brought to perfection by the Gothic builders, it was employed in South France in the previous Romanesque period (eleventh century), and was perhaps invented in antiquity.

by deep undercutting, and to capitals by foliage sculpture. Ornamentation was nevertheless simple and restrained, the favourite device being the *dog-tooth* decoration. Windows were either single, narrow lancets, or double, with simple tracery above the lights. Vaulted roofs were scientifically supported by ribs thrusting in opposite directions, with strong external buttresses. Pillars could accordingly be slender and graceful, avoiding the Norman impression of massiveness.

Early English work is beautifully symbolic. What is called *stiff-leaf* foliage sculptured on the capitals suggests the promise of future life. The leaves are in the act of unfolding. Symbolism is not so real in the succeeding Decorated Gothic period. The name is appropriate, for rich ornamentation is the chief characteristic of Decorated work. Profusion of beautiful detail has been allowed in some measure to obscure the general plan. The carved flowers of the capitals are fully developed, suggesting no possibility of future growth. Indeed, the Decorated style was to some extent a reaction from Early English methods. The churches of the earlier period had been tall and narrow, gloriously proportioned and producing an effect of height and severity. The tendency in Decorated Gothic was towards breadth and overloading of ornament. Distinguishing features are the intricate tracery in the window designing, the clustering of shafts to form piers massive in size, but graceful in design, and the beautiful *ball-flower* ornament.

The religious zeal of the thirteenth-century man had been profoundly stimulated by the Crusades and the coming of the friars. The fourteenth century lacked the devotional spirit. There was not now the same need for churches. Moreover, the residence of the Popes at

Avignon (1309–1377) and the heavy papal taxation of the English Church led to a marked decline in enthusiasm. The drain of the Hundred Years' War, and the Black Death brought poverty and a tendency to disillusionment. In consequence of these developments, Decorated work, though luxuriant, lacks the restraint and discipline of the Early English style. On the other hand, a new love of nature and of the garden may be discerned in the naturalistic ornamentation, foreshadowing the approaching Renaissance.

The fifteenth-century Perpendicular Gothic style has evident traces of the decline of religious zeal.[1] The Church had drifted away from the people. Its higher offices had come to be monopolised by the aristocracy. Wycliffe and his followers, the *Lollards*, had excited popular feeling against the corruption of the higher clergy and the degeneracy of the friars. At the same time, the towns were growing in wealth and power. The over-ornamentation of churches by rich merchants devoid of artistic taste is characteristic of the fifteenth century. Individual display is the dominant note. Designs are symbolically unreal. *Reticulated* windows are characteristic—the stone tracery taking the form of the meshes of a fishing net. The *flamboyant*, or flame-shaped windows of the previous period had been truly symbolic. But the Perpendicular craftsmen were so anxious to produce new and beautiful designs that they forgot that fishing nets do not suggest light. Moreover, the display of heraldry in churches indicates the growth of worldly pride and the desire for individual distinction.

1 On the European Continent, there is no such evident decline. The magnificent Gothic cathedrals at Milan and Seville were built in the fifteenth century. In France, Later Gothic is known as *flamboyant*.

On the other hand, Perpendicular work, with its vertical lines in panelling and tracery, is undoubtedly stately. The great width of the windows was fully taken advantage of by the great glass painters of the period. The richly carved hammer-beam roofs like that of Westminster Hall, and the *fan tracery* of the vaulted ceilings are alike remarkably beautiful. Unfortunately, much of the rich carving of Perpendicular churches was ruthlessly destroyed in the period of the Reformation.

Gothic architecture does not end with the Renaissance; but was modified by classical influences. Closer contact with the Continent involved the gradual disappearance of the Perpendicular style, which had been an insular development. Classical designs make their appearance, porticoes and domes coming into favour in the early seventeenth century. The Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, finished by Inigo Jones in 1621, was the first building in the pure Italian Renaissance style.

The cathedrals and monastic buildings were perhaps the greatest product of the mediæval period. They bear witness to the constructive powers, and the noble ideals, of Christian society in the West. Some mention must now be made of non-Christian influences on mediæval civilisation. In the seventh century, a new world religion, *Islam*, was established by Muhammad, which quickly spread among the peoples of the Near East and northern Africa. Islam was an aggressive, conquering religion, but persecution was not practised; and, in the main, civilisation progressed in the countries overrun by Muhammadan armies. Arabia was the original home of Islam, and the Arabs proved themselves to be great

transmitters of civilisation. Their early conquests brought them into contact with the ancient centres of Mediterranean culture. Here they absorbed the philosophical and scientific works of the Greeks, and widened the field of their speculation by researches into Hindu and Persian thought. It was from the Hindus that the Arabic system of notation was developed. In the tenth and succeeding centuries, Christian scholars flocked to Cordova, and other centres of Arab learning, to become acquainted with Arabian thought, to study medicine, the recently discovered scientific works of Aristotle, and the maps of Arabian geographers. From the universities and libraries of the Arabian world, notably from *Moslem* Spain, compilations, commentaries and original works on astronomy, mathematics, geography, and medicine issued in increasing abundance. Moslem ships brought the wares of the East from the harbours of Syria and Egypt to the Spanish ports and the distant Baltic. It was the Arabs again who introduced from the East the manufacture of cotton and of paper. Their manufactures far excelled those of the Christian West in standard of workmanship and beauty of design. In agriculture they not only practised a more scientific rotation of crops, but were acquainted with the use of fertilisers and the importance of irrigation.

The Arabs thus preserved and extended ancient civilisation. In the eleventh century, indeed, Arabian culture suffered severely at the hands of the Seljukian Turks, who invaded and conquered Asia Minor, Syria, and finally Egypt and Arabia. In Spain, on the other hand, Muhammadan civilisation continued at a high level for another two centuries, and was to exercise a profound influence on neighbouring Christian states.

The fifteenth century marks the transition from mediæval to modern history. The central period of the Middle Ages may be said to have closed with the defeat and death of the Emperor Frederick II, in 1250. From that point the Holy Roman Empire existed in name only, and the ideal of the unity of Christendom under the presidency of Pope and Emperor gradually ceased to dominate men's thoughts. The Papacy itself appeared to lose its universal character with the adoption of Avignon as its place of residence, and an even more serious blow to papal prestige was to follow with the *Great Schism*. These misfortunes could be traced back to the defeat of Pope Boniface VIII at the hands of the King of France (1303). It was the new spirit of nationalism which overthrew the mediæval conception of Empire and Papacy. The middle of the thirteenth century marks the decisive commencement of the process whereby the restricted feudal monarchies of the earlier mediæval period were replaced by strongly centralised national states. The growth of population, the increasing use of money, and the expansion of commerce created conditions unfavourable to feudalism. The manorial system had begun to decay in some parts so early as the twelfth century. Services had been largely commuted into money payments. The process was accelerated by the Black Death; and, by the fifteenth century, in the more progressive countries, men were freed from the links which had bound them to the manorial fields.[1] Land was no longer the monopoly of the feudal classes. The moneyed merchant,

1 We shall see later that substantial remnants of feudalism, involving significant limitations on the freedom of the manorial peasant, persisted in France and other parts of the European Continent at least as late as the French Revolution.

opposed to the continuance of feudalism, had become a power in the state. A significant growth of sentiment in strong opposition to feudal lawlessness may be traced.

Changes in the art of war hastened the downfall of feudalism. The fourteenth-century bowman could defeat feudal chivalry.[1] By the middle of the next century, cannon had been developed to a point at which its employment against the strongest castle could be relied upon to produce decisive results. Moreover, the monarchy was now wealthy enough to be able to maintain a professional army on a more or less permanent basis.

There is no gulf between mediæval and modern history. The first stirrings of the modern spirit may be traced back to the twelfth century. The institutions of the mediæval period very gradually ceased to command the respect and obedience of western Europe. One or two significant dates mark the culmination of a process, or the starting-point of a new development. Such are the disappearance of the Empire in the East (1453), and the French invasion of Italy (1494)—the latter marking the entrance of the principle of aggressive and self-conscious nationalism. Eleven years previously, the man had been born who was finally to destroy the spiritual unity of Christendom.

1 Bowmen indeed required support, if they were to defeat feudal horsemen. It was by the combination of the longbowmen with the dismounted men-at-arms that the great English victories of the fourteenth century over the chivalry of France were won.

CHAPTER VII

The Renaissance and Reformation

EUROPE in the latter half of the Middle Ages was gradually shaping itself into a system of organised territorial states. The commercial expansion of the thirteenth century prepared the way for the triumph of the national principle. In all countries of western Europe, the great unifying force was trade. From the great centres, commerce extended through the whole territory of a state, weakening the great feudal landowners and powerfully assisting the monarchy, and its natural allies —the middle classes. No class had suffered so much as the merchants from the confusion resulting from the variety of local laws and customs, the multiplicity of tolls, and the diversity of coinage. In the fifteenth century, the general support of the *bourgeoisie* gave a great impetus to the movement to establish the supremacy of the national law. England, France and Spain rapidly became strong centralised monarchies; and, with the opening of the sixteenth century, there began the struggle of the new national states for ascendancy in Europe.

Meanwhile, and not unconnected with the increase of wealth through trade, an intellectual and artistic revival had begun in Italy. A movement aiming at recovery of the spirit and achievements of antiquity had begun in the early years of the fourteenth century, or perhaps even earlier. This movement is the so-called *Renaissance*. The expression, however, is by no means satisfactory. It

implies a re-birth, at some more or less definite point of time, of faculties which had been dormant during the Middle Ages. This is a very misleading conception. The Renaissance was a continuous growth, a gradual process which reached its culmination only after centuries of patient striving. The Middle Ages had never completely lost contact with ancient civilisation. The literature of Greece and Rome had at no time ceased to command the respect of mediæval scholars. In the twelfth century, the study of Roman Law had directed attention towards the institutions and literature of Rome. The succeeding century witnessed the rise of *scholastic* thought—a speculative system which owed not a little to Greek philosophy. Long before Chrysoloras began to lecture on Greek at Florence, in the closing years of the fourteenth century, interest in Greek literature had become a living force in various parts of Italy. If enthusiasm for the ancient world is to be regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of the Renaissance, we must date back this movement to the beginning of the thirteenth century and make Dante its greatest figure.

The *Revival of Learning* was thus quite as much the result as it was the cause of the Renaissance. The Renaissance was more than merely a literary and artistic movement; and it is convenient to use the expression as broadly signifying the expansion of the human mind and of human activities in every department of life. Liberty had had little place in the manorial village or in the monastery. Even in the towns, personal initiative had been largely excluded. Emancipation from mediæval trammels prepared the way for fresh ideals based on liberty and individualism. The joy of mundane living and the dignity of man were proclaimed, in opposition

to mediæval asceticism. The Church had preached the helplessness of the individual and the duty of self-sacrifice. The Renaissance sought ever fresh fields for individual achievement.

This process had slowly come to maturity after centuries of development. The founding of the universities had increased the sum total of organised human knowledge. The fourteenth century made a notable advance towards liberty of thought. Petrarch and Boccaccio in Italy, and Chaucer and Wycliffe in England did much to create a fresh intellectual atmosphere. Reverence for the Empire and the Papacy visibly declined. Independence of judgment and fearless criticism characterise the literature of this period. Petrarch did not hesitate to challenge old beliefs, examining them in the light of scientific methods of criticism. Wycliffe boldly attacked the distinguishing features of mediæval theology. At the same time, new interests of a secular and commercial nature had come to the forefront which inevitably stimulated mental activity. A great field was opened for individual initiative and ability. Self-realisation had come at last, and with it full confidence in human powers.

This sense of confidence had been quickened by the geographical expansion of the Mediterranean world. The Crusades had brought men into touch with distant lands, created new needs, and awakened a desire for more intimate knowledge of the world. Even more important as a stimulus to overland and oversea exploration was the peaceful growth of commerce. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, expansion proceeded steadily in the direction of the interior of the Continent of Asia. In the succeeding period, interest was trans-

ferred mainly to the west coast of Africa, and the maritime discoveries of the Portuguese and Italians, made possible by an advance in knowledge of navigation. For long, these projects were conceived with the modest and practical aim of finding new openings for commerce. Even Columbus, when he set out on his momentous expedition of 1492, expected to do no more than discover islands in the Atlantic beyond the Cape Verde group.[1] In the last decade of the fifteenth century, however, came the great discoveries in East and West which revolutionised man's knowledge of the physical world, and confirmed his confidence in his mastery over nature.

Vasco da Gama, by his famous voyage from Lisbon to Calicut (1497–9), demonstrated the practicability of the all-sea route to the East round the African Continent, thus breaking the monopoly of the Arab seamen and Italian traders, and providing a far cheaper mode of transport.

The *effective* discovery of America (for there can be little doubt that the North American coast had been reached by Scandinavian sailors in the early Middle Ages) opened up two new continents to western civilisation. At the same time, it broadened human knowledge. Until the Crusades established new trading connections with the East, knowledge of the world had been practically confined to northern and western Europe and the Mediterranean area. The new discoveries filled in the gaps, and removed the misapprehensions of mediæval geography. The circumnavigation of the globe by Magellan's sailors (1519–22) revealed the immensity of the Pacific Ocean, proved the truth of the theory that

1 Now known as the Islands of the Antilles. See A. P. Newton, in *History*, VII, pp. 40–2.

the earth is round, and afforded some indication as to its size. New races and civilisations were encountered; and new commodities, such as maize, the potato, cocoa, quinine and mahogany wood, were introduced into Europe. The Atlantic replaced the Mediterranean as the commercial centre of the world.

The geographical discoveries aroused a new fund of energy and a delight in adventure and novelty. In discovery, colonisation and exploration, the Atlantic-facing peoples were destined to take the lead. Italy, on the other hand, was the natural home of the intellectual side of the Renaissance movement, commonly known as *humanism*. Greek scholars, anticipating the downfall of the Empire at Constantinople, came there first, and the cordiality of their welcome was in part due to the patriotic feeling which made Italians enthusiastic students of the past glories of Rome. Moreover, Italy was the wealthiest and most highly civilised country in fifteenth-century Europe. Rich patrons of learning were numerous; the standard of public intelligence was high; and classical manuscripts had, throughout the Middle Ages, been preserved in greater abundance there than elsewhere.

A mere list of representative names of Renaissance leaders would be of little value. The Renaissance produced an immense output of works of genius in the fine arts; and it is only by study of the masterpieces themselves that any genuine appreciation of their characteristic merits can be obtained. A few general considerations may be summarised. In the first place, painting and sculpture became, for the first time since the classical period, independent of architecture. In the early stages of the Italian Renaissance, painting was mainly *fresco*

work, the earliest inspiration coming from Giotto (1266–1337), whilst the highest point of excellence was attained in the fifteenth century by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519). Oil painting on canvas was first practised by the Flemish Van Eyck, but soon spread to Italy. Secondly, there is an architectural Renaissance, led by Brunelleschi (1377-1446), in which construction was, to some extent, subordinated to decoration. Rows of columns, surmounted by round arches, became the fashion, whilst the dome superseded the vault. The great architects of the period were primarily painters. Michaelangelo's paintings in the Sistine chapel at Rome are regarded by many as the great masterpiece of the Renaissance. As an architect, Michaelangelo (1475–1564) took over the work of rebuilding the great church of St Peter, which Bramante (1444–1514) had originally planned. Lastly, versatility of genius is a characteristic trait. Leonardo da Vinci, apprenticed as a sculptor-painter, found energy and inspiration for science, engineering and architecture. His scientific experiments included the invention of the breech-loading gun, and the conical bullet. He tried to solve the problem of the circulation of the blood, theorised on the subject of gravitation, and in part anticipated the *Copernican* theory (see page 118) of the Universe. Raphael (1483–1520) was scarcely less versatile, his work as sculptor, architect and painter being based on minute study of classical models.

From Italy, humanism spread to the countries of northern and western Europe. It was in Germany (or possibly in Holland) that the first printing press using movable type was set up, about 1450. The invention of printing enabled western Europe to catch up with the production of the newly discovered classical literature;

and destroyed the monopoly of learning, hitherto possessed by the Church, the universities, and the wealthy few. It made possible popular education, and prepared the way for universal enlightenment.

The new popularity of travel, and the great reputation of Italian universities assisted the rapid diffusion of humanism. Grocyn studied in Italy under Politian, and returned to teach Greek and Latin at Oxford. From Grocyn and his colleague Linacre, the Dutch humanist, Erasmus (1466–1536) received instruction in Greek, whilst Colet and More were further notable recruits. From the first, the movement was less artistic and more philosophical in spirit than the humanism of Italy. A certain lack of earnestness and spirituality had characterised the Italian Renaissance. The northern countries were less interested in art and æstheticism, and more anxious to liberate the reason in science and the individual conscience in religion. A higher standard of scholarship among the clergy was the chief thought of men like Colet and Erasmus. The latter's careful edition of the Greek Testament, with Latin translation and notes (1516) is the typical product of the northern Renaissance; and was intended to open the way for individual study and interpretation of Christian sources. Scholarship invaded the domain of theology, disputing the efficacy of formal religion, and laying the foundations of the science of Biblical criticism.

In Germany the Renaissance, through the emancipation of the individual mind, led direct to the *Reformation.*

During the Middle Ages, demands had from time to time been made for reformation of the doctrines and practice of the Western Church. For the most part, such proposals had been confined to questions of discipline,

or of minor doctrine. Starting in the thirteenth century, however, there arose the conception of the need for drastic reconstruction of the Church system, with a view to opposing the increasing materialism and worldliness. St Francis found that the practice of the Church of his day differed fundamentally from the primitive Christianity; and was driven to propose renunciation of wealth and a return to poverty. But the Franciscans as a whole were prepared to countenance the possession of property, and the protests of the minority, the *Fraticelli*, though they found an echo in the teachings of the *Waldenses*[1] in the remote valleys of Switzerland, were gradually stifled by persecution. The appeal to antiquity and the emphasis on the right of individual judgment were, however, revived in the fourteenth century by Wycliffe and Huss. Both demanded a considerable revision of Christian doctrine; but of greater significance was the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. In England, the followers of Wycliffe, the *Lollards*, appear to have been exterminated by persecution, though a measure of "underground" influence is usually attributed to *Lollardy* in the succeeding century. The *Hussites* of Bohemia, on the other hand, were strong enough, after a series of bitter wars, to win important concessions. The first generation of the fifteenth century, nevertheless, witnessed a partial recovery of authority by the Church. The Council of Constance healed (1415) the disastrous schism. At the same time, the Papacy triumphed over the movement to limit its absolute control over the

1 The Waldenses appear to have been followers of Petrus Waldus of Lyons (*c.* 1170). In point of time they preceded the Fraticelli. They survived, however, the persecution of the Church, and, so late as the fifteenth century, exercised a certain influence over religious thought in particular localities.

Church by entrusting a measure of independent jurisdiction to great ecclesiastical councils.

Hopes of a spiritual and moral regeneration of the Church were thus successively defeated. The inevitable outcome was increasing popular discontent. In the religious sphere, the formalism of Church services had done much to alienate men who felt the need for a personal relationship between God and man. The papal system was essentially *sacerdotal*. The divine favour could be reached only through the medium of validly authorised priests. Forgiveness of sins could be granted by Pope, or priest, on purchase of an *indulgence*, or letter of pardon, which remitted the penalties of the Church in the case of genuinely penitent sinners. Grace could only be attained through the sacraments. The Scriptures had to be accepted in the form in which they were interpreted by the Church. All this was utterly distasteful to men who had imbibed the faith of Wycliffe and Huss, especially their emphasis on the duty of individual investigation. These men were anxious to live a simple, Christian life modelled on personal interpretation of the New Testament and Apostolic writings. In the early years of the fifteenth century hopes had centred on the General Councils. The Pope, however, defeated all efforts to force reform through the medium of ecclesiastical conferences; and it was not until the sixteenth century that papal authority was decisively challenged.

In the interim there occurred a disastrous spiritual relapse. The last years of the fifteenth century saw the spiritual prestige of the Papacy at its lowest point. Successive Popes devoted their attention to worldly pleasures and the building-up of the secular dominion of the Church in Italy. Finally, with the pontificate of

Alexander VI (1492–1503), licentiousness and even cruelty were openly displayed. Lapses from morality on the part of the prelates of all countries became increasingly common. Worldly affairs engrossed attention which should have been devoted to spiritual functions. Lastly, the system of the Church contained many palpable abuses, notably the reckless employment of indulgences as part of a sordid scheme of papal finance.

These abuses were thrown into clearer perspective by the writings of the humanists. Erasmus, in his *Praise of Folly* (1509), satirically exposed clerical failings, following it up with the *Colloquia* (1516)—a trenchant criticism of the vices of priests. At the same time, the collection of material for research, and the progress of Biblical criticism had made such headway that men were no longer willing to tolerate the prohibition of the Church on legitimate enquiry. The opinion was inevitably strengthened that the Church was interested in the suppression of truth.

Discontent of a political and social order reinforced the efforts of those who, on purely religious grounds, had come to demand a drastic reformation of the Church. The late fifteenth century was the age of monarchical centralisation. But the consolidation of the national state could not be completed so long as the Papacy disputed the authority of secular princes over the clergy in their dominions. Papal absolutism would have to be defeated, if the several states were to pursue their independent development. Moreover, the clergy, in all countries, had accumulated vast wealth. This was, on the one hand, an almost irresistible temptation to secular rulers, only too commonly embarrassed by the failure of mediæval sources of revenue to meet the growing expenses of

government; and, on the other, a cause of grievous offence to the laity. Whilst the poorer members of the aristocracy resented the arrogance and superior social status of wealthy prelates, the lower classes were embittered by their neglect of their charitable and pastoral duties. The rising middle classes in the towns, on their part, tended to dispute the control exercised by the Church over education and the guild system. In the late fifteenth century, associations of laymen were significantly formed to decide, independently of the Church, the religious and social duties of the individual.

The Church had thus drifted away from the people. Its higher ranks had come to be monopolised by the nobility. Detested for their spiritual pride, the dignitaries of the Church were condemned for their too frequent lapses from Christian morality. The crushing weight of papal taxation, including such indirect burdens as the sale of pardons and relics, which fell on the laity, was responsible more than any other cause, for the increase in popular discontent. Moreover, the failure of the Church to meet halfway the earnest desire of spiritually minded men for a more personal and less sacerdotal form of worship was bound, sooner or later, to provoke a demand for reformation of doctrine.

The formulation of this demand was the work of Martin Luther (1483–1546). The son of a Saxon miner, Luther received a good education, being sent to Erfurt University to study law. Suddenly abandoning his work, he entered an Augustinian monastery, where he threw himself devotedly into the practices of mediæval asceticism, in the hope of thereby reaching spiritual conviction. The turning-point in his life came when, under the influence of the Vicar-General, Staupitz, Luther

became assured that salvation depended upon personal faith, and was a free gift from God to men who came to Him with repentance and personal trust. In this way, Luther arrived at his conclusion that personal relations could be established between God and man without the necessity for the interposition of priests. Grace might indeed come through sacraments, but salvation was not conditional on such means being used. This is the essential *Protestant* position,[1] expressed in the phrase—"universal priesthood of all believers", and from it have been derived the most conspicuous divergencies from Roman Catholic practice.

In 1506, however, Luther had no idea of leaving the Church, and though he had already convinced himself that God alone could forgive sins, this did not deter him from taking orders. Between 1506 and 1511 his career pursued a normal course. He continued his studies, lectured at Wittenberg University, and paid a visit to Rome, which he found to be a hotbed of vice, where even the cardinals lived unrebuked in sin. He was by no means alone in deploring the relaxed standard of the clergy of his day, and the doctrine of *justification by faith* had many influential defenders. But in 1517, Leo X organised the sale of indulgences on a hitherto unprecedented scale, and it was in protest against the corruption of a practice which had been, in origin, reasonable, that Luther published his celebrated ninety-five theses.

1 Originally, the Protestants were those who protested at the second Diet of Spires, 1529, against the rescinding of the compromise in religion, issued at the first Diet of Spires in 1526. Protestantism was a positive term, used to describe the whole faith affirmed by Luther and his followers. Later, with the rise of various sects, it came to be used negatively and collectively for those Churches which agreed only in denial of Roman Catholicism.

The theses were written in plain, easily intelligible vernacular; and their remarkable circulation indicated the extent to which evangelical piety had gained a hold over the German people. The subsequent proceedings of the Pope, who viewed with alarm the big fall in the sale of indulgences, only served to make Luther a popular hero. The arguments advanced to refute his theses forced Luther to take stock of his entire position. At the Diet of Worms (1521), he affirmed the duty of individual interpretation of the Scriptures, at the same time proclaiming that Popes and Councils might err. Excommunicated by the Pope and banned by the Emperor, who, though personally disposed towards compromise, was dependent on ecclesiastical subsidies for the support of his campaigns, Luther found refuge in an alliance with the princes. Resistance to the centralising policy of Charles V had already committed the latter to a struggle against the imperial authority, and in this struggle Luther was a most useful ally. Thus, opposition to the Emperor, anti-clerical sentiment in all classes, enthusiasm for the more personal and spiritual conception of religion championed by Luther, admiration for his constancy and courage, and the more sordid motives of those who coveted ecclesiastical lands, all brought support to the great reformer. A stubborn conflict, which at first appeared imminent, was, however, postponed, through the exigencies of the political situation. Summoned from Germany to resist the Turks, or to defend portions of his dominions from French intrigue and invasion, Charles was obliged to substitute conciliation for force. In the periods of his absence from Germany, Lutheranism grew apace, achieving a measure of polity and organisation, and

in 1530 a standard of orthodoxy (*The Confession of Augsburg*).

Lutheranism is commonly regarded as weak on the constructive side. It failed to fulfil the promise of its early development. With monarchical support, it triumphed rapidly in Scandinavia. In England, under Henry VIII, it appeared to be on the point of attaining decisive success. In 1539, Brandenburg turned officially Lutheran, whilst Saxony followed suit next year. The north of Germany soon became overwhelmingly Protestant. The organisation of the Lutheran Church, however, revealed grave defects. It was *erastian* in principle, control being exercised by consistories, constituted by the secular authorities. Luther himself had no consistent plan of organisation; and, having purified doctrine and worship, would have been prepared to retain the episcopacy. His own arrangements were makeshift in character, and he failed to introduce any element of popular self-government. Doctrinally, Lutheranism retained many of the essential beliefs of the mediæval Church. His conservatism led Luther to retain such ceremonies as were not at variance with his interpretation of the Scriptures. On the fundamental doctrine of the Eucharist, he pronounced that the substance of Christ's body was present after consecration with that of the bread and wine (*consubstantiation*), a view midway between Rome and Geneva. The distinguishing features of Lutheran worship were the congregational singing of hymns and the emphasis on the preaching of the Word of God.

The absence of any centralisation of control was undoubtedly a source of weakness from the point of view of propaganda; and it is for this reason that Lutheranism

appeared to be, in contrast with Catholicism and Calvinism, essentially a local phenomenon.

Under Zwingli (1484–1531), the Reformation in Switzerland followed a course roughly parallel to that of Luther. In character and training, indeed, there are few points of similarity between the two men. Luther, conservative by nature, had reached his theological position as the outcome of intense religious striving. Zwingli, a humanist before he became a reformer, had passed through no such spiritual struggles, and had no original reverence for authority. A man of wide classical learning, he was distinguished by his deep regard for individual freedom. Though not hesitating to deny altogether the doctrine of the *Real Presence*, he was willing to admit considerable latitude of opinion.

In 1519, Zwingli attacked indulgences as an intolerable abuse. His assertion that tithe should be voluntary and his criticism of the monasteries, the suppression of which was not without material benefits to landowner and peasant, attracted immediate support. But his doctrinal views were too pronounced to secure general acceptance, whilst his strict moral control injured his popularity. Moreover, he allowed his religious system to be closely associated with the political ambitions of the city of Zurich, with the result that he brought into existence a strong combination of political and religious opponents. Zwingli was defeated and slain at the battle of Kappel, 1531; and from that point, Catholicism steadily regained ground. Its progress was, however, checked through the efforts of John Calvin.

Educated for the law, Calvin (1509–64) was a more intellectual and less prejudiced man than Luther. His task was to give Protestantism an organised system of

doctrine and government. The project of a thorough reformation of the Catholic Church from within had never been abandoned. Though vested interests at Rome had secured successive postponements of reform, the Pope was finally won over by the prospect of restoring the cohesive strength of the Church, and so organising effective opposition to further Protestant advances. In 1545, under terms which practically ensured the supremacy of the papal will, a General Council, summoned by Paul III, met at Trent. The uncompromising tone of the majority speedily led to the withdrawal of the Protestant representatives, whereupon the Council settled down to a denunciation of heresy, and to such practical reforms as would increase the offensive and defensive strength of Catholicism. Shortly after the opening of the Council, Charles V launched his long-postponed attack on the Protestant princes of Germany, whilst the severity of Protestant persecutions in France was simultaneously increased. In 1553, Edward VI of England was succeeded by his half-sister Mary, and the wave of persecution threatened to engulf the English Protestants also. Everywhere the tide appeared to have turned against the reformed religions.

Calvin, who had been driven into exile by the persecutions of Francis I (1534), fully realised the magnitude of the danger. Whereas Catholicism had been revitalised by the leaders of the counter-reforming movement, Protestantism was disorganised and disunited. Luther, whilst substituting the authority of Scripture for the authority of the Pope, had provided no infallible interpreter. Protestantism, consequently, tended to break up into innumerable sects, the possibility of utter chaos being averted by the recognition of the state as the ruling

authority with power to impose what limitations it thought necessary on the right of private judgment. Such a system was bound to entail weakness in the face of a persistent and organised foe. Calvin saw that the danger could only be averted by the use of discipline and centralisation. He proposed to fight the *Counter-Reformation* with its own weapons of propaganda, education and organisation.[1] Under his guidance, Calvinism became the striking force of the Protestant Reformation. In this process, some sacrifice of the individual liberty was unavoidable. Religion, however, was for the community, quite as much as it was for the individual; and Calvin had no sympathy with the idea of toleration. There could be no salvation outside the Church. His intolerance was displayed in the burning, at Geneva, of the Unitarian, Servetus.

At the same time, it is possible to exaggerate the harsher elements in Calvin's theology. The doctrine of *predestination* certainly tended to make his followers indomitable in face of persecution; but it was scarcely the distinguishing feature of Calvinism. It was no more than a deduction, or illustration, from the principle that man's salvation was entirely dependent on the grace of God. Calvin himself was not an unsympathetic man.

The great work of Calvin was thus on the constructive and organising side. He perceived that the Church might have to assert its independence of the secular authorities, and accordingly gave Calvinism a polity which provided for a considerable measure of self-government. Church

1 It should be noted, on the other hand, that Calvin's system of polity had been largely elaborated at Geneva prior to the promulgation of many of the counter-reforming decrees of the Council of Trent. Calvinism must not be regarded as essentially "the Protestant reply to the Counter-Reformation".

matters were to be regulated by *consistories*—joint sessions of ministers and elders. Synods and general assemblies were to be similarly composed for wider areas. Close relations with the secular government, on the basis of the state consenting to enforce the decisions of the church courts, were indicated as desirable, and achieved by Calvin himself at Geneva (1541). From Geneva were despatched trained preachers, who carried the doctrines and polity of Calvin to all parts of Europe.

Before Calvin's death, a religious compromise of a not very stable character had been reached in Germany. In 1555 the religious peace of Augsburg permitted each prince to choose between the Catholic and Lutheran religions. Minorities were to be free to emigrate. Lutheran princes were to be allowed to retain ecclesiastical land secularised before 1552.

The "settlement" was unsatisfactory in significant details. No freedom of worship was allowed to the individual. Calvinism was totally excluded. The territorial princes were the only gainers from this arrangement, which finally shattered the ideal of a united Western Church.

In England the authority of the Pope had been repudiated in 1534, but without any thought of challenging the essential doctrines of the Church. Hatred of clerical abuses was as deep and widespread there as in other countries of western Europe; whilst prominent scholars and churchmen, from the opening years of the fifteenth century, had directed their attention to raising the intellectual and moral standards of the clergy. Nevertheless, the preaching of continental reformers antagonised, rather than attracted, Englishmen; and Henry VIII's breach with the Papacy was inspired, in the main, by

personal motives. Hostility to Rome was intensified as a result of the short, but disastrous, reign of Mary (1553–8); and in 1559, an essentially moderate form of the reformed faith was adopted under Elizabeth. This settlement, embodying a compromise in both doctrine and ritual, gradually commended itself to the nation as a whole. In 1561 Scotland also adopted the reformed faith, the Reformation thus tending to draw together the two countries in preparation for the union under the Stuarts.

In the main, however, the Reformation came as a divisive force. It tended to make the state the arbiter in religion, with the result that religious parties fought among themselves for control of the machine of government. In France, religion became inextricably entangled with politics, Catholics and Protestants being too nearly matched in resources, if not in numbers, for a decisive victory to be possible for either side. Finally, after more than a generation of internal warfare, the Protestant leader, who was at the same time the legitimate claimant of the crown, succeeded at the cost of renunciation of his religion. In Germany, the decisive conflict was postponed till the seventeenth century.

It is important to bear in mind the fact that the Reformation came upon a society which had already begun to change. The process of establishment of monarchical authority in the various states of Europe had begun shortly after the middle of the fifteenth century. Before the advent of Luther, the Renaissance had stimulated men in the direction of literature, art, travel, colonisation and commerce. On the other hand, the ideal of a united Christendom had largely ceased to exercise an attraction.

The Reformation accelerated these tendencies. Its

ultimate effect on monarchical authority was greatly to strengthen its basis. During the early years of the sixteenth century, indeed, the Reformation, by introducing religious division, appeared likely to defeat, or at least postpone, the achievement of monarchical centralisation. In Germany, in particular, it frustrated the attempt of Charles V to build up a centralised imperial constitution. But the real vigour of the monarchical principle in Germany was to be found in the separate states; and the Reformation indubitably strengthened the authority of the princes. In countries which adopted the Protestant faith, the crown was emancipated from papal interference; the mediæval *liberties* of the clergy were subordinated; and the king's law made uniformly sovereign. Even in countries which remained Catholic, the king's position had been strengthened by agreements, which the Pope had found it necessary to negotiate, in order to ensure support against the Protestants.

To some extent, the Reformation was in opposition to the secular ideals of the Renaissance. It revived heated theological disputes, and threw back the cause of liberty by substituting the authority of the state for that of the Pope. The state, indeed, was more likely, out of policy, to modify ecclesiastical intolerance; but Luther and Calvin alike cared little for individual freedom, maintaining that unlimited obedience to the constituted authorities was the duty of the subject. Further, the reformers were frequently hostile to enlightenment, opposing scientific research and denouncing the universities.

On the other hand, Protestants had invited public study of the Bible, and, though they asserted the right of private judgment exclusively for themselves, they

were involved in untenable self-contradiction in denying the same right to others. Universal toleration was the logical conclusion; and, though this necessity was only appreciated after generations of religious strife, the Reformation must be said to have indirectly forwarded liberty of conscience. It further promoted external expansion and colonisation, partly through emigration of religious refugees, but also by stimulating men of enterprise in Protestant countries to challenge the monopoly of the newly discovered lands, granted to Spain and Portugal by papal bull.[1]

By the year 1600, Protestantism was safe in Scandinavia and the British Isles. In France, the Protestants had achieved a compact organisation, enjoying political and religious privileges and guaranteed in the possession of a number of garrisoned towns. The greater part of the north of Germany had adopted either the Lutheran or the Calvinist faith, ecclesiastical territory having been largely secularised. The Counter-Reformation, on the other hand, had won notable successes. Southern Germany and the Rhine lands, Poland and the Austrian dominions had been very largely regained for the Catholic faith. Italy had been endangered, but Protestantism had been there rapidly suppressed. Spain had been scarcely influenced by the Reformation movement. In Switzerland and the Netherlands, the Reformation was manifestly a disintegrating force. Switzerland, though it emerged from religious strife nominally a political unity, was in reality paralysed by religious

1 In 1493, Alexander VI had issued a bull, granting to Spain all newly discovered land west of a line drawn one hundred leagues west of the Azores, and to Portugal such land to the east of the same line.

divisions. The Netherlands were sundered, the southern provinces retaining the Catholic religion under Spanish suzerainty, whilst the northern finally (1648) achieved independence.

The Reformation involved economic and social consequences which did not altogether forward civilisation. The confiscation of ecclesiastical endowments, including monastic property, broke up the mediæval system of charity, displaced many landowning corporations which had, on the whole, shown leniency towards their tenants, and hastened the advent of the competitive, individualistic system in farming. Though both Reformers and Counter-Reformers laid stress on education, several mediæval schools were allowed to fall into decay. Educational endowments were diminished; and the argument that the Reformation forwarded the cause of popular education to any great extent is not easy to sustain.

The Reformation can scarcely be considered a popular movement. The lower classes suffered from the dissolution of the monasteries, the suppression of religious guilds, and the reduction in the number of church holidays. Religious persecution drove many from their homes, whilst the so-called *wars of religion* set back the cause of civilisation in many parts of western Europe. In the realm of art, iconoclasm destroyed large quantities of mediæval paintings, dispersed valuable libraries, and abruptly closed the glorious age of Gothic architecture.

In that it revived persecution and produced a narrow theological spirit inimical to liberty of discussion, the Reformation involved a temporary reaction from the ideals of the Renaissance. The later movement towards enlightenment must, moreover, be attributed, in part at least, to the advance of science. Nevertheless, in the

long run, the Reformation forwarded those ideals. Religion became essentially a spiritual matter. The Church ceased to control the secular interests of mankind. The modern world of commerce was clearly foreshadowed. The century which followed the Protestant Reformation was to witness a significant advance in popular enlightenment. Above all, civilisation became more secular in character.

CHAPTER VIII

Religious Toleration and the Growth of Enlightenment

RELIGIOUS toleration is a somewhat indefinite term, rather negative than positive, and admitting of various interpretations. It implies that religious liberty is incomplete. Toleration may indeed be universal, in which case religious equality is an accomplished fact. More commonly, however, there is a dominant religion, and toleration means little more than that nonconformity to that religion is not in itself an offence against the law. In fact, religious liberty is, and has been, a matter of degree. At the present day, in the majority of European countries, it is accepted as a condition of social progress. Freedom of opinion is recognised to be a good thing, whereas coercion has been found to be a mistake. These are momentous conclusions, and they have only been accepted after centuries of bitter strife. Toleration, in matters of religion, is a comparatively recent development. Its origin is to be found in the circumstances which followed the great upheaval of the Reformation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it fell lamentably short of religious liberty. Certain beliefs only were protected, whilst others were prohibited. Civil rights were sometimes conceded, but rarely political. The chief stages through which religious liberty has passed in modern times may be briefly summarised.

The mere toleration of freedom of thought and of the private exercise of worship, is the least complete form

of religious liberty. Freedom of thought is of little significance without some liberty of expression; yet freedom of speech and of publication is a very recent achievement. It is still a crime by English law to publish atheistic beliefs, though the law is no longer enforced. Men are, however, occasionally imprisoned for blasphemy, whilst mere heresy appears to be an ecclesiastical offence, punishable in ecclesiastical courts.

The permission of public worship, and the concession of full civil rights marks a noticeable advance towards religious liberty. Very frequently, however, these concessions are subject to significant exceptions. Freedom of worship may be confined to certain towns, and to registered places of worship within those towns. Civil rights may not be complete. In England, before 1869, no one refusing on religious grounds to take an oath could give evidence in a court of law, unless he were a Quaker.

Where all religions are tolerated, and the exercise of political rights is made independent of any form of religious belief, toleration may be said to be complete.

The history of religious toleration is bound up with the general history of freedom of thought. The challenge to tradition and authority is made in science, historical criticism and politics, as well as in theology. The process is one of the gradual removal of restrictions on enquiry, with, however, periods of retrogression, notably the Middle Ages.

The Greeks may be regarded as the authors of the principle of freedom of discussion. Free thought was inevitably stimulated among the innumerable city states of the Ægean, each with its religious cult and distinctive ideal of life. Moreover, there was no strong class whose

interests were opposed to liberty of discussion. Priests were little more than functionaries of the state. Worship was controlled by the civil authorities, which, in the case of the democracies of Greece, meant the people itself. As a result, criticism was little hampered by authority. At Athens, political discussion was entirely free; and, though there are instances of prosecutions for expression of opinion relating to the gods, there was never any systematic persecution. Even Socrates, who had not hesitated to test by reason all the popular beliefs of his day, enjoyed a long immunity from molestation, his final condemnation (399) being, in the main, due to his championship of the anti-democratic cause. In his defence, Socrates boldly proclaimed the supremacy of the conscience, and nobly vindicated freedom of discussion. "This", he declared, "is the greatest good to man, to discourse daily on virtue, and other things which you have heard me discussing, examining both myself and others, but a life without investigation is not worth living for".[1]

The scientific and philosophic achievements of the Greeks were conditioned by freedom of thought. Only among a community where authority was powerless to restrain the spirit of enquiry could Democritus have enunciated his atomic theory of the universe, or Heraclitus have proclaimed the impermanence of matter. In the sphere of religion, the essential tolerance of the Greeks is evidenced by the absorption of even the non-Hellenic cults of the Mediterranean world.

The tradition of tolerance was maintained by the Romans. The *Stoics* asserted against authority the liberty of individual criticism. In the early Empire, scepticism

1 Plato, *Apology of Socrates*, trans. Cary, p. 28.

spread widely. All worships were tolerated throughout Roman dominions. An exception, however, came to be made in the case of Christianity. The Christians were not only opposed to Emperor-worship, which was intended to symbolise the Empire's unity, but uncompromisingly hostile to the existence of other cults. Persecution was instituted in the political interests of the Empire, though the law was only rigorously applied against the Christians during the reigns of Decius and Diocletian. In 311, this policy was replaced by one which permitted Christians to assemble freely for worship, provided they respected the established laws. Two years later Constantine's better-known Edict of Milan extended toleration over the western provinces of the Empire.

The liberty conceded, however, was essentially precarious. Religious freedom was instituted out of expediency, rather than conviction. Persecution had been tried, and had manifestly failed. Even the Christians had no desire for a measure of general toleration of all beliefs.

In the Middle Ages, toleration was unthinkable. Heresy was a sin for which God might punish the whole community. Salvation could only come through the priestly hierarchy. Error must be suppressed in the eternal interests of the heretic himself. In the thirteenth century, the alarming spread of heretical beliefs was met by the launching of crusades, similar to those organised against the infidel of the East. The duty of extirpating heresy devolved upon the territorial prince, assisted by the machinery of the *Inquisition*. In the first generation of the thirteenth century, the *Albigensian Crusade* overcame the resistance of the heretical subjects of the Count of Toulouse. From time to time, bishops had been enjoined to take active steps against unbelievers. Their

efforts were now to be seconded by the order of Dominican friars, established in 1216, with the primary purpose of repressing heresy. In 1248, the Inquisition proper was founded by Innocent IV, its administration being very largely entrusted to the Dominicans. These measures were supported by the public opinion of mediæval Europe; and reinforced, from time to time, by the persecuting enactments of secular governments. Free thought, however, persisted in some measure among the Muhammadans of Spain and Africa.

The Renaissance created a new atmosphere of hope and joy, in which intolerance could not thrive. The Italian humanists were more interested in the secular world around them, and in the pagan literature of classical antiquity, than in mediæval theology. The invention of printing favoured the extension of knowledge, whilst lessened respect for the Papacy assisted the emancipation of reason. The publication (1543) of the work of Copernicus was perhaps the most notable challenge to established beliefs, though it was many years before his theory was generally accepted. Copernicus's book may be said to have originated the scientific assault on the citadel of authority.

The study of science had not been entirely neglected in the Christian West during the mediæval era. In fact, something approaching enthusiasm for learning and for scientific investigation prevailed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the work of men like Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus, we can trace an increasing tendency to use the method of experimental research. The fourteenth century is notable for advance in many scientific fields. Henry of Mondeville inaugurated the study and use of antiseptic surgery. There was a marked

improvement, in most countries of western Europe, in the knowledge and treatment of contagious diseases. In another department of thought, the science of dynamics, significant pioneer work was performed at the University of Paris. The work of Arabian scholars has already received notice. Nevertheless, the Church had done what it could to hinder scientific progress, and it was not until the Renaissance that freedom of thought and investigation was sufficiently recognised to admit of a general advance. The early years of the sixteenth century witnessed a scientific revival in almost all branches of thought. Paracelsus[1] and Linacre led the way in the study of medicine. In astronomy, Copernicus was able to give scientific reasons for his belief that the earth and planets revolved about a central sun. The science of navigation was profoundly affected by the astronomical developments foreshadowed by the discoveries of Copernicus. The printing press forwarded the work of enlightenment, and gradually, through the efforts of scholars in every land, the new scientific method, resting on accurate observation and experiment, came to be recognised as the established procedure of scientific research.

The Reformation, on the other hand, temporarily set back the cause of liberty. The reformers agreed with Rome that there should be only one church, from which dissent could not be permitted. Luther held that liberty of worship was inconsistent with the Scriptures. Calvin's theocracy sternly suppressed "false" opinions. Even the moderate Melanchthon approved the burning of the Unitarian Servetus. It may be said, indeed, that the re-

1 The great work of Paracelsus (1493–1541) lay in the application of chemical drugs to the science of healing.

formers merely substituted the authority of Scripture for that of Rome. Toleration was almost universally thought to be morally wrong. Moreover, the Reformation had transferred jurisdiction over the Church, in countries which adopted Protestantism, to the secular ruler; and potent reasons could be urged against the desirability, from a political point of view, of religious toleration. Religion was a powerful bond of union, and the unity of the state seemed precarious unless it was reflected in religious unity. Some measure of uniformity, at least in practice, thus came to be demanded by lay rulers for political reasons.

Nevertheless, freedom of thought was, in the long run, forwarded by the Reformation. The Reformers had proclaimed the supremacy of Scripture over authority, and the duty of individual study. In effect, they had admitted the indefensibility of persecution. Their repudiation, in practice, of the right of private judgment was thus logically inadmissible, and they were slowly driven to modify ecclesiastical intolerance. Moreover, discussion and criticism had been inevitably stimulated by the new prominence given to Bible study.

Some of the new sects, indeed, had never been opposed to toleration. The *Socinians* of the sixteenth century admitted, in practice as well as in theory, the duty of individual interpretation, their leader Socinus (1559–1604) contemplating a state Church, with complete toleration of all sects. From them the *Arminians* of Holland, and the *Anabaptists* of Central Europe, adopted the principle. It was not, however, from this side that the practice of toleration was to develop. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, conversions took place among the lay rulers and statesmen of Europe,

brought about by considerations of political expediency. It was practical experience of the evils of intolerance which prepared the way for the concession of religious freedom.

At the same time, the progress of scientific investigation undermined the respect for authority. In the last years of the sixteenth century, Galileo became convinced of the truth of the Copernican theory, largely as a result of his discovery of the moons of Jupiter. The improvement of the telescope made possible advances undreamt of by Copernicus, and Kepler's laws of planetary motion substantiated many of his theories. Newton's celebrated laws (*Principia*, 1687) involved, in the long run, acceptance of the fact that the movement of terrestrial bodies could be explained by a simple principle of mechanics, thus weakening respect for the traditional teaching of the Church. The forces of the Counter-Reformation, however, were inveterately opposed to the new scientific investigation; and the general acceptance of the doctrines of Copernicus and Galileo was long postponed. It was not until 1835 that Galileo's works were removed from the papal index. On the other hand, the age was becoming increasingly secular and humane. A disinterested love of truth, which can hardly be said to have existed among the Christian nations of the mediæval period, was beginning to prevail. With the moderation of theological zeal and controversy, an open mind towards the great problems of the universe became possible. The new spirit found expression in the establishment of the Royal Society of England (1662), and of the French Académie des Sciences (1666).

In England, the attempt to force unwilling men to conform to the worship and doctrines of the established

Church was slowly abandoned. Sir Thomas More had suggested the establishment of toleration for his ideal society in the *Utopia*; but in practice he was as ready to persecute as his contemporaries. The statutes of Elizabeth's reign abounded in clauses establishing new treasons and multiplying penalties for ecclesiastical offences. In reaction against such measures, there emerged, first among the Arminian Baptists, the principle of perfect liberty of conscience. Gradually, the cause of religious liberty won adherents among the divines of the dominant Church. Chillingworth, in his *Religion of Protestantism*, admitted that latitude in doctrine was, in itself, a desirable thing. The Reformation had vindicated the supremacy of Scripture; and this inevitably involved liberty of interpretation. His emphasis on private judgment was reinforced by Jeremy Taylor, who boldly maintained that the Apostles' Creed was a sufficient basis for belief.

The Toleration Act, 1689, did no more than concede freedom of worship to certain Protestant bodies, but the year was not to pass without a significant vindication of the principle of religious freedom. Whereas previous writers had made no deep impress on the thought of their age, Locke, in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, succeeded in convincing thoughtful men that religion was a private matter, and that persecution only produced hypocrisy. The view that freedom of opinion was a positive good gradually spread during the eighteenth century.

In 1728, it became the practice for an annual Indemnity Act to be passed in favour of office-holders who had not taken the sacrament in the form prescribed. Considerable relief was extended to Catholics, who would

renounce certain doctrines and the Pope's civil power, in 1791. The abolition of religious tests followed in 1828–9. Jews were admitted to political rights some thirty years later, and in 1871 came the removal of religious tests at the universities. Meanwhile, education had been put upon a secular basis.

In France, religious toleration was won by the Protestants, or *Huguenots*, so early as the sixteenth century, and lost again within a hundred years, owing to the fact that few men of learning and influence had been genuinely converted to the principle. Henry IV's Edict of Nantes (1598) went further in concessions, political and religious, to the Huguenots than public opinion was prepared to endorse. Its revocation in 1685 provoked few manifestations of dissent outside the ranks of the persecuted party. From Holland, however, there issued the earnest defence of toleration by the Protestant Bayle, who based his arguments on the impossibility of attaining such a degree of certitude as might justify the persecution of "error".

It was not until 1787 that a measure of toleration was again accorded. During the greater part of the eighteenth century, Protestants in France remained without civil rights. They could not be legally married, nor could they assemble for private exercise of their religion. Voltaire and Portalis did something to rouse public opinion against persecution; and in 1787 civil rights were conceded, together with restricted liberty of worship. Protestants, however, were still excluded from various careers.

Religious liberty emerged from the Revolution. Article 10 of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* was to the effect that "no one is to be interfered with on

account of his opinions, even on the subject of religion, so long as their manifestation does not disturb public order, as established by law". In December, 1789, it was decreed that eligibility for civil and military office was not confined to Catholics. Mirabeau ardently desired the "most unlimited liberty of religion". Intolerance was nevertheless displayed in the decrees establishing the Church on a civil basis, and in the subsequent proceedings of the various assemblies. Under the Napoleonic *Concordat* of 1801, full toleration was established alongside of a recognised state Church.

In Germany, owing to its political system, complete toleration was a late development. The facilities for emigration to another state made toleration not so urgently necessary in the interests of pacification. The religious Peace of Augsburg, 1555, thus left the decision as between Catholicism and Lutheranism to the territorial princes, and the Treaty of Westphalia, 1648, did little more than add Calvinism to the religions that were legally admissible. With a few exceptions, it was left to each ruler to concede, or deny, toleration to adherents of the two faiths which he did not himself embrace. Subjects, however, who in 1627 had enjoyed no free exercise of their religion, were to be granted the liberty of private worship and full civil rights.

Toleration consequently varied from state to state, though political expediency, especially the necessity for attracting population, gradually induced princes to extend its practice. Frederick William of Prussia, *the Great Elector* (1640–88), consistently supported the principle. Frederick *the Great* (1740–86) went further, openly tolerating all sects, on the ground that morality and good citizenship were independent of religion. In 1794, full

liberty of conscience was guaranteed. In the Austrian dominions a liberal measure of toleration was conceded by Joseph II in 1781.

Holland, in the seventeenth century, stood forth as the protagonist of religious toleration. William *the Silent*, indeed, had with difficulty induced the Netherlanders of the previous century to guarantee to the dissentient minority a minimum of security. Within thirty years of his assassination, however, the Arminians had adopted freedom of worship, and thereafter toleration was gradually extended, though not without some opposition from the dominant Calvinist sect.

It is in America that full toleration in religion was first achieved in an organised political community. The earliest *Puritan* emigrants were imbued with the spirit of exclusive salvation, and their communities in New Plymouth and Massachusetts made church membership the necessary condition of full citizenship. Roger Williams was the first to affirm complete liberty of conscience in the settlement which he established at Providence, Rhode Island (1636). His community was essentially democratic; and the charter which he obtained from England permitted virtually unrestricted self-government. Not only were political rights secured to all professed Christians, but religion was withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the civil authorities.

Williams's practice was followed in varying degree by other colonies. In 1649, the Act of Toleration of the assembly of Maryland granted religious liberty to all Christians. Penn fully adopted the principle for his colony of Pennsylvania (1682).

The first amendment to the constitution of the United States prohibited any interference by Congress

with "the free exercise of religion", and withdrew religious matters entirely from the control of the civil government. In recent years, the separation of Church and state has been a feature of democratic legislation. In France, it involved (1905) abrogation of the Napoleonic Concordat.

The triumph of liberalism in religion was accompanied by the growth of rationalism and the extension of humanitarian sentiment. The abolition of the slave trade, in which Denmark led the way (1792), was the first step towards the universal extinction of slavery itself. The growth of a public conscience was also manifested in the movement to reform the barbarous penal code of eighteenth-century Europe. It was from Italy that enlightened views as to the purpose of punishment and the treatment of criminals first issued, Beccaria's notable *Essay on Crimes and Punishments* appearing in 1764. In the early years of the nineteenth century, torture was abolished in most Christian countries, and the number of capital offences drastically reduced. Sympathy with animals was a further indication of the spread of humane ideas.

Finally, there is the significant development of popular education. The Reformation had done something to forward the cause of gratuitous, primary education; but illiteracy was still the rule among the labouring classes of the pre-revolutionary epoch. In the nineteenth century, it became the recognised duty of governments to see that no section of the community was denied the privileges of education. Moreover, the school system gradually became secular and democratic in character. In the mediæval and early modern centuries the Church had controlled education. The French Revolutionary

assemblies, and later Napoleon, endeavoured to establish a state system from primary school to *lycée*, or high school. Compulsory education on a national basis was achieved in England in 1870–6, and in France a little later. In America, education has become entirely secular and democratic.[1]

This expansion of human outlook and sympathies has naturally tended to develop relations of friendship between civilised peoples of all nations. The growth of an international conscience prepared the way for the organisation of peace. But this momentous subject must be reserved for discussion in the concluding chapter.

1 In many European countries, free compulsory education, though adopted in principle much earlier, was not really enforced before the twentieth century. Illiteracy is still very conspicuous in Spain, and has caused some disquiet in the United States of America.

CHAPTER IX

Sea Power

THE expression *sea power* has only come into general use in comparatively recent times. The works of the late Admiral Mahan did much, both to popularise the term, and to draw attention to the importance of naval warfare and naval supremacy in the conflicts of world history. Though often used somewhat inaccurately to mean simply naval strength, or the command of the seas, sea power, in the proper sense of the term, covers every source of strength, economic as well as military or naval, which a country may exploit by availing herself, to the full, of her maritime opportunities. For example, the sea is a source of sustenance, and the exploitation of its food-supplies may be a most valuable support to a community advantageously situated for sea fishing. The rise to prosperity of the Netherlands may, indeed, be largely ascribed to this factor.

Naval history is mainly concerned with the part which sea power has played in promoting the greatness of states. The circumstances under which nations in the past obtained strength at sea, and the peculiar dangers which have threatened maritime communities fall within the province of the naval historian.

The importance of strength at sea had been realised in the Mediterranean area at a very early date. The empire of the Cretans was apparently based on command of that sea. For nearly a thousand years, the Phœnicians maintained a maritime supremacy, which was founded on

their skill as navigators. Alone of ancient seafarers, they had passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, visited Spain, Britain and possibly the Baltic, and, in the last years of the seventh century B.C., circumnavigated Africa.[1] Lying at the terminals of the Asiatic trade routes, they controlled the commerce of the Mediterranean world.

The Greeks learnt much from the Phœnicians, and their *triremes*, or galleys with three banks of oars, achieved, in the fifth century, mastery of the Ægean. Fighting at sea exercised a vital influence on the fortunes of the Greek world, the overthrow of the Persian fleet at Salamis (480), and the destruction of the Athenian navy at Ægospotami (405) being notable illustrations.

On the other hand, naval power, strictly so called, can scarcely be said to have exercised a dominating influence. There was little, if any, naval warfare. The Greeks, and later the Romans, were victorious on the sea because of their military prowess, rather than their nautical skill, which was, indeed, for the most part conspicuously absent. Their warships were oared galleys, so that tactics meant invariably ramming or boarding. In days when square sails were in use, sailing ships could not get nearer to the wind than six points, and an enemy to windward might thus easily be inaccessible. Reliance was consequently placed on the galleys, which were lightly built for speed over short distances. When once they had been manœuvred alongside their opponents, the fighting was left to the soldiers. It was through the superiority in military valour and training of the Greeks

1 The story is, perhaps, not entirely credible, but there is good reason to believe that the Phœnicians at least explored the western coast of Africa as far south as the Gulf of Guinea.

that the victory at Salamis was secured. Sea fights were thus essentially contests between armies at sea. Little was known of navigation; and, with the exception of the Phœnicians, no ancient people showed any marked maritime aptitude.

Under such circumstances, there could be no great maritime development. The galley could not keep the seas in heavy weather. It had no accommodation for stores, and it was grossly uneconomical of labour. Its unseaworthiness goes far to explain how it was that the sea, in ancient times, was a barrier rather than a highway. Apart from the fact that its construction did not enable it to withstand high seas, the galley was obliged to put into port at frequent intervals to rest or change its crew. It is not surprising that captains hugged the shore, and refused to venture on oceanic voyages.

The Romans, though they achieved successes at sea, were essentially non-maritime. Their galleys were larger, more heavily built, and, therefore, more seaworthy; but they made little use of their strength at sea. In their numerous wars, the fact that galleys could not stay out night and day prevented the institution of effective blockades. During the struggle with Hannibal, they could not effectively use their preponderance at sea to prevent the reinforcement of the Carthaginian army, or even to cut the communications between Sicily and Carthage. After the fall of their rival, no attempt was made to secure a port for Roman ships in Africa. Little was done even to suppress piracy and police the seas. At the height of its prosperity, the Roman Empire contented itself with mastery of the Mediterranean, without attempting to develop sea power elsewhere.

The Northmen were the boldest navigators of the

early mediæval period. Their long boats, *clinker-built* and gracefully proportioned, were remarkably seaworthy; and, though undecked, were capable of making oceanic voyages. When the wind was favourable, a square sail could be hoisted on the single mast. Steering was performed by an oar secured on the starboard (*steerboard*) side. From the Northmen, the Anglo-Saxons and Normans developed their war vessels, gradually increasing the length and adding protection to the soldiers and sailors by means of *castles* built up in the bows and stern. The *White Ship* of Henry I of England appears to have been so protected, and to have been capable of accommodating three hundred persons. The Mediterranean peoples, however, retained the lead in shipbuilding; and it was from the Saracens in the twelfth century that improvements were adopted. The Crusades revealed the advantage possessed by the high-pooped Saracen ships, which enabled their bowmen to shoot down on the decks of the crusading vessels. In consequence, thirteenth-century ships came to be built with castellated structures, designed to give corresponding advantages to Christian archers, whilst fighting-tops were also added. Cabins were constructed beneath the platforms, and rudders substituted for the steering oar.

In addition to the vessel intended primarily for war purposes, there was the slower, but more stable, cargo ship. Many of these vessels would be requisitioned when an army had to be transported across the seas. The great majority of the ships which the *Cinque ports*[1] of England were bound to furnish for the transportation

1 The Cinque ports were Hastings, Hythe, Romney, Dover and Sandwich; but Winchelsea and Rye were, from early times associated with them.

of the king's army, were quite small boats, normally engaged in coastwise traffic, or even piracy. Gradually, the superior qualities of the broader-beamed merchantman began to affect the design of war vessels. The fine lines of the Scandinavian boats were replaced by a less graceful, but more serviceable design for the hull. Improvement in the fighting platforms necessitated greater stability, especially when, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, small guns, or *serpentines* began to be mounted. About the same time, the *lateen* sail was adopted, enabling ships to sail much closer to the wind than had been possible with a single square sail.

Sea power played some part in the wars of the mediæval period. The English command of the Channel, following the victory at Sluys (1340), enabled the army to reduce Calais (1346–7). A generation later, the defeat of the Earl of Pembroke (1372), severed the sea communications between England and Aquitaine, and powerfully contributed to the breakdown of English resistance in the south of France.

On the other hand, there was little that can be called naval warfare. The range of the long bow did not exceed three hundred yards, so that the issue was inevitably decided by boarding. Hand-to-hand fighting between soldiers was the normal type of mediæval sea battle. There were no organised fleet actions, and no naval strategy. It is difficult to select any campaign where victory or defeat at sea was the really decisive factor.

The explanation is simple, if we bear in mind that the sailing ship had not yet ousted the galley, and that the science of navigation was still in a very elementary stage. Though mediæval sailing ships were slowly pushing their way further afield, voyages were still coastwise

journeys from port to port. In the winter, captains remained in harbour. Commerce itself was intermittent, and the maintenance of ships a heavy expense. The Council of the young Henry VI did not hesitate to dispose of the entire "navy" of the king of England.

In the thirteenth century, the *mariner's compass* and the *graduated astrolabe* came into use in the Mediterranean; and their employment made it just possible to strike across the open sea. It was not, however, until the fifteenth century, that a really seaworthy ship, capable of undertaking a long oceanic voyage, was evolved. The latter part of this century is accordingly the great age of maritime discovery. The sixteenth century produced the heavily gunned ship, which was to make possible naval warfare in the strict sense. As the galley continued to be employed by the Mediterranean powers, the lead in shipbuilding passed to the North. Henry VII built the *Regent* which mounted no less than 225 serpentines on successive platforms. His son made notable improvements, discarding the light serpentines, and insisting on the mounting of heavy guns in the hulls of his vessels. Embrasures, or *ports* cut in the sides of the ship, made possible the man-of-war with broadside armament, which was scarcely improved upon until the nineteenth century.

During the reign of Henry VIII, naval supremacy indubitably rested with England. Not only did the king revolutionise shipbuilding, but he increased the number of the royal ships to no less than eighty-five, established new dockyards, and organised an efficient administration, directed by a *Navy Board.* His work was ably maintained, under Elizabeth, by John Hawkins, who improved on what is usually called the *Great Harry class*

(from the best-known of Henry VIII's ships) in the famous *Revenge*. This ship, whilst being as heavily gunned, was constructed on the lines of the galley, and was consequently endowed with much greater speed.[1]

The incomparable superiority of the new ships was clearly revealed in the Anglo-Spanish fighting of the reign of Elizabeth. The galleys were harmless, unless they could ram or board their opponents; and, though their prestige in the eyes of Philip of Spain had been raised by their victory over the Turkish galleys at Lepanto (1571), their uselessness in opposition to the heavily armed sailing ship was demonstrated beyond question by Drake's success at Cadiz (1587). At the most, the galley could accommodate five small guns in her bows, and these were soon silenced by the heavy broadsides of the Elizabethan vessels. Philip accordingly relied upon sailing ships, or *galleons*, for the celebrated *Armada* expedition of 1588, and crowded them with soldiers in the expectation of a "battel-at-sea" of the mediæval type. The English, however, had a big superiority in heavy guns, which could penetrate the hulls of the slower and clumsier galleons of Spain, and so effectually prevent any attempt at boarding. By working to the westward of the Spanish ships, Howard and Drake secured the *weathergage*; and the superior speed of the English vessels enabled them to break away from an engagement before receiving material damage. The Spanish admiral could find no shelter for his ships; and

1 The need for a ship which would be able to work its way through the ice floes of the North-East and North-West passages also tended towards the evolution of the fine-lined easily managed ship. Eight vessels of the *Revenge* class were finally constructed by Hawkins.

was finally driven out of the open roadstead of Calais by the device of sending in fireships.

The crushing defeat of the Armada revealed the folly of attempting an invasion of England without securing command of the seas. It also demonstrated the fighting qualities of the thirty-four Crown ships which formed the striking force of the 197 vessels of all sorts assembled under the English flag. The Armada, it should be emphasised, was, strictly speaking, a military expedition. Its ships were, for the most part, transports, poorly equipped and with the minimum complement of sailors. In seamanship and gunnery, the English were overwhelmingly superior. So decisive was the discomfiture of the Spaniards, that Philip II was persuaded to rebuild his navy on the model of the English capital ship. In the early seventeenth century, France and Holland built similar navies.

The seventeenth century witnessed the great conflict for supremacy at sea between the maritime powers of Holland and England. From this conflict the latter emerged victorious, having reorganised the entire machinery of her naval administration, and greatly widened the range of her operations at sea. Her supremacy, in the long run, had been foreshadowed by the peculiarly advantageous position of the country for the development of sea power. Insularity enabled her to safeguard the national independence, without the need for maintaining a large army. At the same time, it favoured concentration of aim on attainment of maritime supremacy, England thus avoiding the dilemma, in which France was early placed, of sacrificing, in some measure, either naval strength or pursuit of a policy of territorial expansion. Strategically, geography placed

England in a most advantageous position, in the event of a war with either France or the Dutch Republic. France, until the construction, in recent times, of the port of Cherbourg, had no port of refuge in the Channel east of Brest; and her inability to operate with vigour there made it impossible for her effectively to menace the sea communication of the island power. Moreover, concentration of her naval strength was rendered difficult by the fact that the Mediterranean and Atlantic fleets could only co-operate after a hazardous passage through the Straits of Gibraltar. As against the Dutch, the prevalence of winds from the west was a formidable advantage to English vessels, enabling them to strike at the Dutch coast without grave risk of a counter-stroke. England was further situated on the flank of Dutch trade passing through the Channel, an advantage which navigating conditions augmented, inasmuch as ships invariably hugged the English coast.

The enormous length and deeply indented character of the coast-line of Great Britain was also favourable to the development of sea power. In England, no place is more than seventy miles from the sea. Maritime aptitude early distinguished Englishmen from most continental peoples. Poverty of the soil of Holland, indeed, drove the Dutch to the sea, where they revealed qualities of seamanship in no wise inferior to the English. They lacked, however, a sufficient territorial basis for maritime expansion on a large scale. The vast development of their carrying trade they owed to their energy and resourcefulness, at a time when other nations had not emerged from the strife and confusion of the post-Reformation period. The favourable position of Holland midway between the Baltic and the Mediterranean also

counted for much. Nevertheless, in the Anglo-Dutch warfare of the seventeenth century, the scales were found to be too heavily weighted in favour of England. Dutch ships, owing to the shallowness of Dutch ports, were smaller and less able to withstand the broadsides of the English capital ship. Naval administration was shared by no less than five separate Admiralty boards. Moreover, in the decisive fighting of 1672–4, the Dutch were called upon simultaneously to resist the advance of the armies of Louis XIV.

Naval tactics were profoundly influenced by the experiments of this period. The *fighting instructions* of March 29th, 1653, enjoined the *line-ahead* formation for English squadrons, in order to enable ships to make full use of their broadside armaments. In engagements prior to this year, once the enemy's line had been broken, ships might be crowded together in a disorganised mêlée, and much unnecessary damage be incurred. The adoption of the new tactics involved the gradual disappearance of the armed merchantmen, which could not take their place as *ships of the line*. The Navy thus became a purely professional force.

On the side of naval administration, significant progress falls within the period of Charles II's reign (1660–85), and is associated with the name of Samuel Pepys. The strength of the Commonwealth navy was maintained. Discipline was improved, and the system of victualling of the fleet overhauled. Strategy and tactics underwent important developments. Strategy became increasingly dominated by the idea of seeking out and destroying the enemy's fleet. For the first time naval operations were systematically brought to bear on the course of land campaigns. In the Third Anglo-

Dutch War, a blockade of the coast of Holland was attempted. Towards the close of the century, France replaced Holland as the chief naval rival of England; and, in the course of hostilities against Louis XIV, an attempt was made to assert English sea power in the Mediterranean.

The Franco-British conflict at sea was fought out during the eighteenth century. The final achievement of supremacy by Great Britain was by no means a foregone conclusion. France took the lead in shipbuilding, and in the scientific study of naval strategy and tactics.[1] Her ultimate defeat was mainly due to the over-straining of French resources, called upon simultaneously to support prolonged continental campaigns and a policy of maritime and colonial expansion. France had the makings of a great sea power, but the territorial ambitions of her kings absorbed the chief energies of the state. By way of contrast Great Britain, except during the period of the War of American Independence (1776–83), was unhampered by continental campaigns. British statesmen early recognised that the condition of success in the New World and in India lay in command of the seas. The task of the British fleet was to convey armies to American and Indian ports, to protect their communications, and to co-operate, where possible, in the reduction of French possessions. Moreover, by sealing French harbours, the fleet could prevent the despatch of enemy reinforcements.

In the Seven Years' War (1756–63), Britain developed

1 The establishment by the French Government of a senior officers' course at the Naval College at Brest was the outcome of investigation into the causes of the French failure during the Seven Years' War. The French fleet was consequently in a high state of efficiency at the outbreak of the war of 1778–83.

her maximum effort at sea. Hawke notably contributed to success by his system of *close blockade* of French ports. It was the efficiency of this system, rather than the brilliant victory at Quiberon Bay (great as was Hawke's feat of seamanship on that occasion), which contributed to the decisive victory of the British. Strategy, as a whole, was ably directed by the elder Pitt towards the goal of bringing a superiority of strength to bear on the vital area of operations. British armies and British squadrons were steadily supported from home. In consequence, it was sea power which turned the scale in the critical fighting (1758–60). Canada was won through the magnificent co-operation of land and sea forces. In India, the capitulation of Pondicherry was the reward for Admiral Steevens' exploit in maintaining the blockade throughout the cyclone season.

Conduct of the naval operations of the American War (1776–83), on the other hand, was incompetent and even corrupt. Under Sandwich (1771–82), jobbery and favouritism slackened the reins of discipline, and led to the resignation from the chief command of Howe, Keppel, and Geary. Defective co-operation between the military and naval arms, and inferiority of strength at a vital point, account for the disaster at Yorktown (1781), where Cornwallis capitulated. French fleets were allowed to leave their harbours unmolested, whilst the British navy attempted the impossible task of distributing its forces so as to leave no point undefended. Pitt's maxim of bringing superiority of force to bear on the area of decisive operations was neglected.

In the last years of the war, naval tactics, under the influence of a group of French and English theorists, became less stereotyped. The line-ahead formation tended

to make battles mere artillery duels. The attempt to break the enemy's line could easily be countered by tacking; and, as maintenance of the line was prescribed throughout the engagement, a decisive stroke against the enemy's sea power was rendered difficult of achievement. By *breaking the line*, on the other hand, and closing with the enemy, a decision might be reached. In this way, Rodney gained his great victory of April 12th, 1782, though the credit for the new manœuvre belongs rather to Admirals Kempenfelt and Howe, who had introduced the method into the Channel fleet some three years previously.

The French Revolution introduced chaos into the navy of France. The professional officers, trained under Choiseul, were massacred, or driven into exile. Ships were ill-found, and their crews scanty and unmanageable. Seamanship and good gunnery were conspicuously absent. Under such circumstances, close blockade of French ports was unnecessary. During the winter months, Brest was left open, in the hope of tempting the enemy out. The manœuvre was successful; and, on June 1st, 1794, Howe attacked the enemy to leeward, breaking his line and inflicting a severe defeat.

The reinforcement of the French navy by the fleets of Holland and Spain at a time when Great Britain was seriously embarrassed by mutinies in her fleets, involved a genuine menace to the security of the English coasts. Only the great victories off Cape St Vincent and Camperdown (1797), ruined the project of invasion. In both cases, victory was achieved by skilful employment of the new tactics as developed by Howe (1790–4).

With the recommencement of the war in 1803, the sea power of Britain was again called upon for its

maximum effort. Not only had invasion to be averted, but trade convoyed and defended, whilst mastery of the sea had to be utilised to assist the defeat of French armies on land. Decisions of grave import confronted British statesmen. Should Britain's effort be concentrated on the sea? Ought a close blockade to be maintained at the various French ports? What strategical plan of operations was best calculated to avert danger from Napoleon?

The close blockade, both of Brest and of Toulon, proved impracticable. The wear and tear on the ships necessitated constant refitting, and the blockade had to be replaced by *effective observation.* The strategical plan was one of concentration in the Channel. Neither Nelson in the Mediterranean, nor Cornwallis in the Atlantic could seal up French ships in French harbours; but both were resolved to bring the enemy to decisive action before any general linking-up of the Napoleonic fleets could be consummated. Villeneuve's "success" in getting away from Toulon, and effecting a partial junction with Spanish forces was immaterial, so long as the British fleets were undefeated. The British counter-concentration in the Channel gave Napoleon little hope of success, even had the Brest fleet eluded Cornwallis. Two months before Trafalgar, when Villeneuve turned south to Cadiz, Napoleon's plan had patently broken down.

Trafalgar (1805) is noteworthy for the perfection by Nelson of the manœuvre of *breaking the line*, which had been gradually developed by Kempenfelt, Howe and their successors. The attack in two columns, and the crushing of the enemy's centre by Nelson, whilst Collingwood, with the other squadron, concentrated

on the rear, were the leading conceptions of Nelson's plan. The capture or destruction of eighteen enemy ships, without the loss of a single British vessel, was an indication of the superiority in training and personnel of the British.

The Napoleonic wars demonstrated that an invasion of England was impossible, so long as command of the seas was retained by Great Britain. On the other hand, the American War of 1812 revealed the fact that British gunnery was inferior to that of the Americans, whilst, in general seamanship, the latter were seen to be at least the equals of their opponents.

Though the importance of sea power was demonstrated in full by the wars of the nineteenth century (notably in the American Civil War), naval warfare was not a conspicuous feature of the period. Rivalry in shipbuilding, in the scientific construction of weapons of war, and in the securing of valuable naval stations, became, however, increasingly intense. With the introduction of the steam ship and the invention of shell fire, naval warfare was revolutionised, and problems of strategy and tactics had to be approached on entirely different lines. Britain succeeded in maintaining her supremacy at sea; but the publication in 1890 of Admiral Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power on History* went far to convince rival continental powers that national greatness depended on command of the seas. In the opening years of the twentieth century, Germany began to challenge the maritime supremacy of Britain, a menace which was only dispelled with the conclusion of the Great War.

CHAPTER X

The Development of Commerce

THE history of commerce is largely the history of civilisation, extending from the adoption in primitive times of a rude system of barter down to the present highly intricate system of international exchange. The origin of trade is to be found in the formalities observed by primitive man for the interchange of valued articles. A pack of neolithic hunters in possession of abundant quantities of a superior kind of flint would be willing to barter this commodity for, perhaps, the plumage of certain birds. In course of time, the exchange came to be effected by well-established ceremonies, and at particular gathering places. Visitors were to be treated as guests, rather than enemies. Disputes were to be settled in a way understood and recognised as just by all parties. This is the origin of market law.

In early times, there could be little activity of commerce. The system of barter was itself a cause of restriction. Even when some such token of exchange as the *cowrie shell* had come into use, the token might not be of universal demand. Moreover, the prevalence of fighting and the general insecurity of life was inimical to trade.

In the Mediterranean area, commerce came to be of importance in the centuries following the year 1000 B.C. The civilisations of Egypt and Mesopotamia had evolved a division of labour with a high degree of specialisation of industrial occupations. The Egyptians invented

processes for the manufacture of glass. A considerable degree of perfection was attained in the production of cloth. Dyeing was a flourishing industry. Great skill was shown in metal work. But the barriers between peoples—the difficulties of transportation, and the absence of a metallic currency, for long impeded the activity of commerce.

The Phœnicians were the first people to give their chief attention to seaborne commerce. In the early seventh century they began to use coins[1] for their business transactions. Their ships visited the Baltic in search of amber, and carried on a regular trade with Cornwall and the Scilly Isles, exchanging manufactured articles for tin. Gradually, however, supremacy passed from the Phœnicians to the Greeks. Greek ships were more serviceable and more numerous. The activity of the Phœnicians tended, moreover, to be increasingly hampered by Persian interference.

The conquests of Alexander the Great led to the introduction of coinage in lands east of the Mediterranean; but significant progress in the commercial sphere was delayed until the establishment of the Roman Empire. The Romans were not a maritime or a commercial people, and their early arrangements show little regard for commerce. They succeeded, however, to a large degree, in overcoming the difficulties of communication. Sea routes were unsatisfactory, owing to the absence of navigating instruments and the inability of ships to stand battering by heavy seas. The magnificent Roman roads, on the other hand, and the security and good order established under the *pax romana* made possible the wide

1 It is thought that coinage was invented by the Lydians about the seventh century B.C.

extension of commerce. Towns with flourishing industries and well-thronged markets grew up in all parts of the Empire. Even the remote Scandinavian lands were linked up in the chain of imperial commerce.

With the collapse of the Empire in the West, economic conditions returned to the primitive. The Teutonic invaders were incapable of appreciating or utilising the imperial machinery of administration. Though the amount of destruction has been exaggerated, society in the early mediæval period was incomparably poorer. Money largely disappeared, *natural economy* taking its place. The village, or the manorial estate, became a self-sufficing unity. The town, in many cases, did not survive the shock of the barbarian invasions. Under such circumstances, commerce practically ceased.

The recovery was very gradual. Over the whole of western Europe, the machinery of government was defective and largely inoperative. Under feudalism, all control tended to be localised. Some interchange of commodities indeed was found to be indispensable, but the ideal was the self-dependent feudal manor.

Progress depended on the rise and prosperity of the towns, where alone order and good government could be maintained. Early mediæval towns were imperfectly differentiated from the surrounding countryside. Gradually, the existence of fortifications, or of market facilities, attracted craftsmen. Normally, the market, with its special peace and its customs founded on the common mercantile usages of all peoples, was the centre of development. By the eleventh century, the more fortunate towns had secured, by charter, certain liberties of buying and selling; and thereafter, we can trace the evolution on the part of the towns of a conscious trade policy.

That policy was based on the ideal of self-sufficiency. Trade was thought to be a local and municipal affair. Citizens, even of neighbouring towns, were treated as foreigners, and subjected to heavy disabilities. Expansion was sought by inter-municipal treaties, negotiated between virtually independent units. Even within the town, practice was restrictive. Only full burgesses were free to enjoy municipal privileges. In the twelfth century, a further element of restriction—that of the *guild*, merchant or craft—made its appearance. The function of the guild was to maintain the monopoly of trading for its members. Outsiders, even if burgesses, were commonly prohibited from selling retail, and were subject to special tolls. Entry into the guilds, though sometimes on a hereditary basis, was normally through a stage of apprenticeship; and here again there were opportunities to exclude the many, and to confine the privileges of trading to a narrow oligarchy.

Such a situation was tolerable only so long as economic progress was bound up with the prosperity of the towns. It entailed a conflict of local interests and the existence of special privileges which barred the way to wider union. By the thirteenth century, some curtailment of municipal autonomy had clearly become imperative; but the machinery of government was not yet in all countries sufficiently effective to bring about this result. In England and France, the process of subordinating the interests of the towns to the wider interests of the nation as a whole proceeded rapidly. On the other hand, in Germany and Italy the monarchical authority was weak; and wider interests than those of the individual town were represented, inadequately it is true, by various city leagues, of which the *Hansa* is

the best known. A mere grouping of towns could not secure effective economic control or reconcile the conflicting interests of town and country. Moreover, the variations in currency, consequent on the possession by many German cities of the privilege of minting their own money, and the frequent debasement of town coinage, threatened serious dislocation of commerce. In consequence, in the fifteenth century, the governments, in several German states, began to take over from the towns the function of trade regulation, gradually abolishing special privileges and enforcing common measures relative to importation and exportation. In Wurttemberg, from 1495, ordinances of the prince began to regulate trade on a common national basis. Internal freedom of trade was deliberately aimed at. In the North, the development was much slower; and it was, in many cases, not until the eighteenth century that the right of princes to issue regulations affecting every part of the state came to be recognised.

In England, where national consciousness was of early birth, and a strong monarchical constitution had been erected by the Norman and Angevin monarchs, supersession of the towns by the central government, as the guardian of the trade interests of the state, originated in the twelfth century, and was complete by the fourteenth. The adoption of a consistent economic policy was, however, retarded by the absence of systematic interest in economic affairs, and by defective machinery for enforcing a policy. In fact, it is scarcely too much to say that the Middle Ages did not advance to the conception of an economic policy. Even in England, legislation was not the outcome of any co-ordinated ideas as to the national interests, but usually expressed the demands of

a party, based on some particular interest. The chief motive of the Government was the maintenance of an adequate revenue, and, to accomplish this, kings were quite prepared to favour foreign merchants to the detriment of national interests. In England, the policy of the crown was usually opposed to that of the native merchants.

Thus, by the fifteenth century, the anarchy of conflicting interests had, in all countries, become a grievous hindrance to economic progress.

A period of great commercial expansion was ushered in by the geographical discoveries of the Renaissance era. The Mediterranean ceased to be the centre of commercial activity. Spain, Portugal and England inherited the greatness and the prosperity of Venice and Genoa. At the same time, the explorers had opened up vast new markets for European wares, whilst the abundance of gold and silver, which before long was obtained from the American mines, made it possible to finance big undertakings. The sixteenth-century merchant was able to command accumulations of capital, and to take advantage of the new machinery of credit, which, before 1492, had been very imperfectly organised. At the same time, the feeble governments of the mediæval period were replaced by strong national monarchies. Protection for life and property stimulated internal trade, and broke down the isolation of mediæval life. The royal currency displaced all others. Merchants could cater for the national market, and transport goods freely from one town to another.

These developments impelled men towards a wider economic organisation. Local customs and regulations were a manifest hindrance to progress. The merchant

class consequently asked that commerce and industry should be the exclusive province of the national authorities. They were now strong enough to represent their interests as the national interest. The political consolidation of many states had reached the stage when men could conceive the trade of the state as a whole. Moreover, the government soon came to be impressed with the importance of bringing the whole force of the state to bear on the satisfaction of the urgent economic needs of the community.

These were the circumstances out of which arose what is known to historians as *the Mercantile System*. Briefly, this system aimed at producing a self-sufficing economic whole, by careful adjustment of the machinery of trade. In the mercantilist programme, first place was given to the development of maritime strength as the necessary preliminary to expansion of foreign trade. The stimulation of industry and the encouragement of agriculture were also systematically pursued.

The object in view was originally political rather than commercial. It was thought that, to be great, a country must be rich. Only a wealthy state could maintain a great navy. The very independence of the community would be menaced unless self-sufficiency in such vital products as the raw materials required for the manufacture of armaments could be achieved. The economic motive of finding new markets and stimulating employment was present, but was subordinate to the political object of safeguarding the national security.

In England, where internal union had been achieved under the early Tudors, stress was laid on mercantilism as a means of developing shipping and promoting overseas commerce. On the Continent, mercantilism hastened

and made more complete the consolidation of the territories of states. The self-contained modern state was the product of economic organisation, as much as of political consolidation; and, from this point of view the historical justification of mercantilism lies in the fact that it was nothing less than "state making in the modern sense which creates out of the political community an economic community". (Schmoller.)

The mediæval town had been a self-contained unit of production and consumption, with its own system of currency and credit. Privileged trade, based on exclusion of the foreigner, had brought power and prosperity. It was naturally thought that the same result could be produced for the territory of the state by similar methods. In England, where internal consolidation had been accomplished with little difficulty, the ideal was the self-sufficiency of a mercantilist empire. Emphasis was accordingly placed on the development of overseas commerce. In continental countries, the various territories subject to the jurisdiction of a prince had first to be incorporated in an organically-united area. The internal transformation of the country was even more important than the erection of external barriers. Introduction of freedom of trade within all the territories of a state, and improvement of communications were characteristic features of mercantilist policy.

In the sixteenth century, money was a very important element in war. In England, down to the recoinage under William III, there was a genuine shortage of currency. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that an exaggerated view of the importance of the precious metals was entertained. A country which did not own mines could only obtain adequate supplies by

stimulation of its external trade. On the other hand, as Thomas Mun (1571–1641) pointed out, superfluity of money "made wares dear", whilst some countries which had no use for English commodities, yielded a very profitable trade in return for English money.

Mun's arguments led to the acceptance of the principle of "the balance of trade". His contention was that, if exports could be made to exceed imports, the difference must mean the accumulation of treasure. He was well aware of the fact that when applied to trade with a particular country, the principle might give fallacious results. Where he was in advance of his contemporaries was in the measures which he recommended for the promotion of trade, and in particular his insistence on the necessity for permitting some exportation of bullion.

The mercantilists no doubt exaggerated the importance of money as a medium of exchange; but there was some truth in the contention that, if a country had insufficient money at her disposal, she could only trade with countries which would take her goods. England, in particular, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had no great variety of commodities to export; and might suffer serious inconvenience, if unable to trade direct with countries where English products were not in demand. Criticism lies against the mercantilists mainly on other grounds. The total wealth of the world was regarded as a fixed amount, not subject to material increase. Hence, if a country seized a large share of the world's commerce, this would operate to the detriment of other countries. Depression of the trade of a rival power was held to be as important as extension of that of one's own country. Commerce was thus, in general

estimation, a branch of warfare, governed by elaborate rules of strategy, which, in fact, operated as a grievous burden on native commerce. The tendency of mercantilism to promote warfare, and ultimately to set back the cause of economic progress is clearly revealed in the administration of Louis XIV and his minister, Colbert. Believing that France could be made prosperous, and Holland reduced to submission, by tariff barriers against Dutch goods, Colbert embarked on a war of tariffs with his Dutch neighbours, which issued in the disastrous war of 1672–8. The fallacy of the mercantilists lay in their assumption that it was possible to sell without buying.

At an early stage, attention had been directed towards colonies as a means of supplementing the economic resources of the mother country. The era of modern colonisation begins in the sixteenth century. The discovery of the New World had opened up a new and attractive field for European settlement. It was followed by the Reformation, which divided Europe into two bitterly hostile camps, and thus reinforced the arguments in favour of national self-sufficiency. Moreover, the New World afforded a refuge for religious dissent. In ancient times, political and military considerations, in the main, had prompted the establishment of colonies. Party strife in the mother city had been the cause of the foundation of many Greek colonies; whilst the Roman *coloniæ* had been essentially settlements of retired legionaries. In the colonising movements of the Reformation era, economic and religious motives were uppermost. Early in the sixteenth century, men had begun cautiously to advocate colonisation as a means of giving a new vent to native manufactures. A century later,

with the general adoption of mercantilist principles, colonies were seen to be necessary to the full attainment of the ideal of self-sufficiency. Whereas the function of the mother country was held to be the accumulation of capital, the construction of a vast mercantile marine, and the maximum development of her manufacturing capacity, colonies were considered to be indispensable for the production of the raw materials required both for naval purposes and for manufacture for the market. A self-sufficing empire needed, above all, tropical colonies, the productions of which would supplement those of the mother country in a much more valuable way than was possible in the case of colonies situated in the temperate zone. The latter, indeed, might eventually become important markets for the manufactures of the mother country; but, in the seventeenth century, it was as sources of supply that colonies were mainly prized. Inasmuch as tropical plantations could not be worked by white labour, trading stations became necessary for the supply of slaves. With this end in view, European nations first became interested in the continent of Africa.

Colonial policy was governed by this estimate of the essential functions of mother country and colonies. If the latter were to supply the raw materials which would obviate the need for dependence on the foreigner, they would have to be compelled to concentrate their energies on this particular task. If the products of the temperate-zone colonies competed with those of the mother country, the exportation of such goods would have to be subjected to some measure of restraint. Both groups of colonies would inevitably be expected to depend entirely on the mother country for manufactured

goods, just as the mother country was to draw her supplies of raw material exclusively from the colonies. In neither case were the interests of the consumer to be taken into account. Under the English system, colonial products were favourably differentiated in payment of duties; but the state could not be powerful if its government was impecunious; and, in order that the king's revenue should not suffer, it was necessary to make duties high. Various regulations sought to mitigate the hardships of the colonial merchant. Duties could be *drawn back* on the re-exportation of colonial goods to the European market. Most important of all, the colonists were freely admitted to the advantages of the Navigation Acts, which, whilst confining colonial trade to narrow channels, greatly stimulated colonial shipbuilding.

As applied to the American colonies of Great Britain, the essence of mercantilism came to be the restriction of colonial trade to the English market, with some compensating advantages, at the expense of the foreigner.

By way of contrast, mercantilism, as interpreted by the governments of continental countries, tended to be one-sided and distinctly less comprehensive. The establishment of a self-sufficing empire was, more often than not, secondary to the aim of extracting from foreign trade the maximum of profit. In Dutch hands, mercantilism was not a well co-ordinated system under which trade would react on industry, and produce a self-dependent state; but rather a means of ensuring a steady flow of wealth from plantations that were in no sense regarded as offshoots of the parent state. To this end, the interests of the oversea territories were ruthlessly sacrificed. They were governed by trading companies, the first thought of which was always to

control production in such a way as would maintain the price of plantation products in the European market. The inevitable result was the impoverishment of wide areas; and, in settlements, notably the Cape, which had progressed beyond the limits of mere trading stations, profound political and economic discontent.

The entry of France into competition with other nations for supremacy in oversea trade was deferred until the attainment, in the seventeenth century, of a measure of internal consolidation. The tentative beginnings of French maritime and colonial enterprise may indeed be traced to the sixteenth century; but it was not until the time of Richelieu that the attention of the Government was systematically directed towards commerce and colonisation. Richelieu's attempt to foster trade in America and Madagascar, by means of monopolistic companies, failed owing to insufficient capital. On the other hand, the name of Colbert is so intimately connected with a co-ordinated policy of commercial and industrial regulation that the expression *Colbertism* has come into use to denote the constructive mercantilism which came into fashion in most European countries in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Colbert's colonial policy does not compare favourably with that of the Restoration era in England. His Company of the Isles of America accomplished the settlement of some potentially valuable islands of the West Indies; but he was unwilling to afford any genuine measure of reciprocity in trading. In England, the government had prohibited the cultivation of tobacco, as an earnest of its intention to guarantee to the colonial producer a monopoly of the home market in tropical and sub-tropical commodities. Colbert scarcely troubled

to consider the interests of the colonies, when they did not coincide with those of the mother country.

In the eighteenth century French colonies came to be comparatively free from commercial restraint. The object of the French Government in promoting colonies had, from the first, been the stimulation of wealth and mere territorial expansion, rather than the acquisition of new markets for French goods, or new sources of supply of valued raw materials. Hence greater liberty in importation and exportation of goods had been conceded than was enjoyed by British colonies in the eighteenth century. Politically, on the other hand, France treated her colonies much less liberally. Autonomy in local affairs, with liberty of self-taxation, had been conceded by the British authorities in the seventeenth century. *The Old Colonial System* involved a considerable degree of self-government in the political sphere, whilst centralising control of commercial affairs. It was not until the reign of George III that an attempt was made to tax the colonies through the machinery of the Imperial Parliament; and to use the weapon of trade regulation as a means of procuring revenue from the colonies. French colonies, on the other hand, were arbitrarily governed; and in many cases, notably Canada, grievously over-taxed. Where company rule obtained, government was scarcely less oppressive than in the case of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape. French colonies throve, where prosperity existed, despite the companies and the Government at home. That discontent accumulated more rapidly and more dangerously in British North America is attributable to the maturer development of the British colonies. Owing to the military needs of the motherland in Europe, Canada and

the French islands were but sparsely populated. Canada never became self-sufficing, whilst the aristocratic organisation of French society was there preserved in its essential characteristics. Separatist and even republican tendencies, on the other hand, had been present in British North America from the first settlements on American soil.

Though the Mercantile System, as administered by Walpole and his successors, involved some substantial benefits to colonial trade, it was inelastic, and it had come to be interpreted by a Parliament which represented the vested interests of English manufacturers. The altered circumstances of the eighteenth century in North America rendered increasingly irksome its restrictions and prohibitions.

The disruption of the British Empire in 1783 dealt a mortal blow to mercantilist conceptions. So early as the seventeenth century, free-trade economists had questioned the validity of the *balance of trade* argument. Hume, in 1740, suggested that England might benefit from continental prosperity. The pioneer of the new thought, however, was Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* (1776) trenchantly criticised the gospel of mercantilism. Smith pointed out that trade was essentially an exchange of goods for goods, that money would flow where it was chiefly wanted, and that mercantilism tended to defeat its own object, since the over-abundance of bullion raised prices and so encouraged the influx of foreign goods. All countries, he declared, profited by the free interchange of their commodities; and the true balance of trade indebtedness was dependent on a number of factors which the mercantilists ignored.

There were fallacies in Smith's arguments. He

exaggerated the economic interdependence of eighteenth-century communities; and was obsessed by the idea that a nearer trade was always more profitable than a more distant one. However, the growing volume of British exports, after the loss of the American colonies, seemed to bear out Smith's theories. The Anglo-French treaty of 1786 made the first serious breach in mercantilism, as applied to foreign trade. The mechanical inventions of the late eighteenth century entailed the supremacy of British manufactures; and the feeling that the removal of all restrictions would facilitate the capture of fresh markets stimulated free-trade agitation. Protective duties were gradually removed, and the Navigation Acts repealed (1322–49). Since 1849, British ports have been free to the ships of all countries.

A reaction set in after 1871, owing to political developments. Protective duties were a means to "secure the home market" (Bismarck's tariff, 1879), and promote the national idea. There has been a distinct revival of mercantilist ideas. The German Empire embraced a new mercantilist policy, based on political and national instincts. In France, free trade had been the policy of the discredited Second Empire, and had never been really popular. Even in England, there has been some swing of the pendulum in favour of protection. The argument that free trade is only advantageous economically to the consumer, and that, in fact, Great Britain did not enjoy *free* trade, because she was forced to develop along certain lines by the pressure of foreign competition, has had considerable weight.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the pursuit of self-sufficiency disrupted the British Empire and made universal an attitude towards European

colonies which precluded the ideals of self-determination and free partnership. The new colonial system of the nineteenth century was largely a reaction from mercantilism. At the same time, it should be remembered that mercantilism represented at bottom a sincere effort to create out of the anarchy of discordant interests, characteristic of the mediæval period, a sound national economy.

CHAPTER XI

The Industrial Revolution

THE *Industrial Revolution* is the name given to the complex process in agriculture and industry which gradually transformed human enterprise, and gave birth to the industrial civilisation of the present day. The substitution of mechanical power for handicraft, the growth of the factory system, and the enclosure of the common fields were the outward and visible changes of the new *régime*. Beneath the surface, the human mind had begun to manifest restless activity in departments which had hitherto exercised little attraction for intellectual men. The extension of scientific knowledge and the progress of rationalism had stimulated enquiry into existing methods of producing wealth. Adam Smith had made fashionable ideas of freedom in commerce and industry. Capital had accumulated in the hands of enterprising merchants and farmers, who were disposed to give attention to improvements in production and distribution. At the same time, in many industries, a point had been reached when the sheer spur of necessity drove men to attempt, by the invention of new processes, a reorganisation of the mechanism of manufacture.

In England, the Industrial Revolution may be said to belong to the period extending from the accession of George III to the passing of the Great Reform Bill. The development, indeed, was, in many respects, a mere acceleration of seventeenth-century changes. It had no

sudden beginning in or about the year 1760, and the momentous changes which were to transform society had certainly not been accomplished by the year 1832. The Industrial Revolution, in fact, came about in different industries at widely differing points of time; and, even in the same trade, diversity is revealed in different areas. The great inventions of the eighteenth century in many cases operated but slowly to displace more primitive and less economical methods. The "revolution", if the term is applicable at all, must clearly be spread out over a great many years. It was in its economic and social results on the daily life of the people that the movement was manifestly revolutionary.

In the Middle Ages, the prevailing organisation of industry was that known as the *guild system*, under which the individual craftsman worked, with his own tools, on his own material. The needs of the market were well known, and subject to little fluctuation. *Domestic* industry is usually distinguished from the guild system as involving the existence of a middleman, or *entrepreneur*. Probably, in many industries, the two existed side by side in the later mediæval period. The domestic worker was, in some way or another, dependent on the middleman. To him he would normally dispose of the finished article, even if the materials used had been his own. The tendency would be for the middleman to provide the materials and fix the rate of payment, irrespective of the market price of the article. The system would thus be, in effect, *capitalist*, and the domestic worker would be virtually a wage-earner. Such conditions existed in the West of England woollen industry in the middle of the fifteenth century. In the tin-mining industry of Cornwall, capitalism existed very much earlier. By the reign of

Elizabeth, in many industries, it had ceased to be exceptional. It is thus clearly inadmissible to refer to the Industrial Revolution as a movement which substituted the *capitalist* for the *domestic* system.

The changes in industry were preceded by a Commercial and an Agricultural Revolution, which, from many points of view, may be regarded as essential preliminaries to the Industrial Revolution. The development of the banking system and the consolidation of the national debt encouraged the accumulation of capital, and made possible its investment in industry.[1] In agriculture, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had witnessed, in many districts, significant departures from mediæval practice. Attention was now concentrated on the discovery of improved rotation of crops and the introduction of more scientific methods of cultivation. There was urgent need for change. Over a great part of the soil of England, the common-fields system still obtained. The rotation of crops was governed by tradition, the most familiar being wheat or rye, peas or beans, and fallow. Turnips and clover were only beginning to be known in the seventeenth century (having been introduced from Flanders by Weston[2] in the early years of that century); whilst the difficulty of how to secure an adequate supply of winter feed for the cattle had never been satisfactorily solved. Disease spread rapidly, in the absence of hedges, among the underfed and under-

1. It should not be supposed that this was entirely a modern development. There were capitalistic banking houses in the Italian cities in the thirteenth century; and a not inconsiderable amount of capital was invested in this, and subsequent, centuries, in the cloth trade, mining and shipbuilding.

2 Sir Richard Weston's *Discours of Husbandrie used in Brabant & Flanders* was written 1644–9 during his residence in the Low Countries.

sized animals. Weeds grew on the grassy *balks* and *headlands*, and the wind scattered the seeds over the arable. Cross-ploughing and cross-harrowing were rendered impracticable by the narrow width of strips, whilst time was wasted in passing from one strip to another. Moreover, the slightest change in the time-honoured husbandry required the unanimous consent of all strip-holders.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, enthusiastic farmers discovered the valuable properties of clover, which returned nitrogen to the soil, and turnips, which, apart from their value for feeding stock, helped to clean the land. A fallow period could thus be dispensed with. The famous Norfolk four-course rotation consisted of turnips, barley or oats, clover and wheat. The names of Bradley, Townshend, and Coke of Holkham, are associated with the new system. At the same time stock-breeding was revolutionised by Aislabie and Bakewell. The conversion of land, which had been arable for centuries, into pasture produced rich meadows, where Bakewell's new scientific methods of breeding could achieve the finest results. Horses came into general use for farming operations, and this stimulated men towards improvements in horse-breeding.

In regard to methods of cultivation, the *drilling* of seed in carefully prepared beds, instead of sowing it broadcast, was employed by Jethro Tull. His drill, invented in the early years of the eighteenth century, allowed ample space between the rows for thorough hoeing; and produced such good results that corn crops could be obtained many seasons successively from the same piece of land. At the same time, attention was given to irrigation, drainage, and manuring of land.

The pioneers of the new methods were one and all advocates of *enclosure*. Only too frequently, agricultural reconstruction was impeded by the inertia and conservatism of smallholders and others, who clung to the customary methods. Some parts of England, indeed, had never known the open-fields system; whilst the sixteenth century had witnessed the enclosure of the counties round London and of large districts in the west and south-west. For centuries, enclosure by private agreement had proceeded, in varying degree, in different parts of the country; and, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the homogeneous village, with its open fields and common rights, was probably becoming the exception. In some villages, the peasants themselves agreed to consolidate their scattered strips into compact holdings, which would make possible experiments in husbandry. In such cases, enclosure took place piecemeal, indicating a degree of elasticity in manorial arrangements. On the whole, however, it must be admitted that the common-fields system operated as a discouragement to improvements in agriculture.

The enclosures of the period of the Industrial Revolution were mainly designed to increase the yield of the old arable lands. Between 1760 and 1797, close on 1500 Enclosure Acts were passed by Parliament, the majority relating to land in the corn-growing area of the East Midlands. The procedure by private Act purported to give full opportunity for expression of opinion by all concerned. Commissioners were in every case appointed whose duty it was to see that every owner of strips and meadowland was allotted a share of the land equal in value to what he had held. All holdings were required to be adequately fenced and hedged.

Enclosure was hastened by the outbreak, in 1793, of the French wars, with the resulting high prices for agricultural produce. England had ceased to be a corn-exporting country some twenty years earlier, and was coming to need imports on a small scale. As a result of the war, wheat rose, in average price per quarter, from 46*s*. to 80*s*. Improvements in agricultural efficiency became a matter of grave national concern. Enclosures enormously increased the food-supplies of the nation, owing to the opportunity which they afforded to introduce the new scientific methods.

The smallholder and the cottager,[1] on the other hand, suffered severely in the process. Many of the portions were too small to be worth working. The old right of pasturing a cow on the common, which in many cases they represented, had been much more valuable. Moreover, the expenses of enclosure were frequently monstrous, and had to be borne by all owners in proportion to their allotments. Arthur Young[2] quotes the case of a village of 1206 acres, where the mere cost of getting the Act passed, irrespective of commissioners' and surveyors' fees, amounted to £324. 15*s*. In all, the legal expenses amounted in this case to nearly £800. The cost of fencing allotments was a further grievous burden which ruined many smallholders, and forwarded the process whereby land was accumulated in the hands of a relatively small number of wealthy men. Under such circumstances, men like Young, who had been enthusiastic supporters of enclosure, expressed regret for

1 Cottagers were men with rights of pasturage over the common lands, but no share in the arable fields.

2 Young (1741–1820), a consistent supporter of the new scientific farming, was secretary of the Board of Agriculture, 1793.

the partiality and injustice of the methods by which it frequently came about.

From agriculture we may pass to the iron industry, progress in which was a condition of the development of all other industries. The use of charcoal for smelting the ore had resulted in the ominous depletion of the timber-supplies of England, and threatened altogether to extinguish the native iron industry. Though ore was plentiful, large quantities of *pig* and *bar* iron had to be imported, owing to the urgency of the fuel question. Charcoal was also used in the furnace for refining the hard, but brittle, pig and making it into *wrought* iron.

So early as 1619, Dudley had discovered that coke could be substituted for charcoal in smelting; but his invention was lost, and the problem had to be solved afresh by the Darbys. Nevertheless, progress was slow until the discovery of a process which enabled coke to be used in the furnace. The iron became carbonised and brittle if coke fuel came into actual contact with the ore; and, noticing this fact, Henry Cort (1784) invented the *reverberatory furnace*, the principle of which was the separation of the bed, in which the ore lay, from the fire, by a bridge over which the flame swept downwards to melt the ore. Impurities were expelled by what was known as *puddling* or stirring the molten metal. As a consequence of these inventions, the iron industry grew up in close proximity to the coalfields. With the discovery (1833) that coal could be used in place of coke in smelting, the iron industry of Scotland began to rival that of England.[1]

The civilisation of the twentieth century has been

1 The Scottish iron industry prior to 1833 was hampered by the inferior coking qualities of Scottish coal.

made possible by the large-scale production of steel. Steel is very pure iron mixed with carbon; and down to the eighteenth century, it had been produced by placing bars of wrought iron in a charcoal fire. A more flexible type, *cast-steel*, was invented by Huntsman; but steel could not be really economically produced till Bessemer's discovery of a process whereby molten iron could be directly converted into that metal. The Bessemer process was perfected when lime came to be used in the *converter*, as a *basic lining* to absorb impurities. The age of steel begins in the 'sixties of the nineteenth century.

The application of machinery to the textiles group transformed the manufacture of cotton and worsted cloth at an earlier date than in the case of the woollen industry. Technical difficulties impeded the use of the new machines for the weaving of woollen cloth. On the other hand, the manufacture of cotton goods was speedily converted from being a relatively unimportant industry into one of the chief sources of England's prosperity. Before 1760, cotton yarn was only used for *weft*, with a *warp* of wool or linen. Paul's invention for spinning by rollers and Hargreaves's *jenny* (1764) greatly increased the rate of production of thread without altering its quality; and it was not until the 'seventies that Arkwright's *water frame* was brought into use to secure yarn strong enough for warp. Crompton's *mule* (1779) produced an even finer thread.

In weaving, Kay's *flying shuttle* (invented 1733, but not generally used until after 1760) was a device which assisted the domestic weaver, by enabling him to work the broad loom without an assistant to return the shuttle. Inventions, such as this, gave a new lease of life to the domestic system, for the machinery did not

involve the use of water power. Crompton's mule could be set up in the worker's cottage; and with its help a weaver could make fine muslins. Cartwright's loom, however, which after 1789 was worked by steam, necessitated the erection of factories. Though the power loom was only gradually introduced, the passing of the domestic weaver was rendered, in the long run, inevitable.

The new machinery imposed a heavy strain on the thread; and the raw wool was apt to break under the strain. For *worsted* cloth long-fibred straight wool was used, which required *combing*, originally done by hand. Cartwright's machinery made the process much less costly at the expense of the wool-combers. In the worsted industry, machinery could be used almost as early as for cotton. For weaving woollen cloth, short-fibred wool had to be *carded*, or worked into a maze. The thread was not so strong, though the invention of carding machinery involved a great improvement. It was not until 1826 that the power loom was introduced into the Yorkshire woollen industry; and, so late as the middle of the nineteenth century, much weaving was still being done in the homes of domestic workers.

The mere stimulation of production would have availed little without improvement in the means of communication. In many cases, notably the pottery industry, inland manufacture was crippled by defective communications. The introduction of heavy wheeled vehicles in the sixteenth century had been disastrous to the causeways of loose stones which served as main roads, and still more so to the mere bridle paths which connected village with village. In the early years of the seventeenth century, the *turnpike* system improved matters, by entrusting the repair of sections of roads to

trusts empowered to levy tolls on traffic; but it never became anything like universal. Metcalfe, commencing work in 1765, produced a metalled road by the close packing of stones; but the surface was too soft to stand much wear and tear. Telford (1757–1834) and McAdam (1756–1836) had made a scientific study of the qualities of road materials, and the various problems of road engineering. Telford built a firm foundation, and was concerned to discover the right degree of convexity for the surface of a road. McAdam dispensed with the blocks which Telford used for his foundation, and obtained a better surface by the close packing of successive layers of broken stones. Both men were continuously employed to reconstruct the high roads, so as to make possible the more speedy despatch of mails in the stage coaches. By the year 1825, the average speed had been increased from six to nine miles per hour, and it had become possible to keep scheduled time.

The transport of goods in bulk, especially where, as in the case of pottery, the goods were fragile, could only be achieved by the construction of canals. At first, the object was to connect the new manufacturing centres with the coalfields. Brindley's Bridgewater Canal (1759) halved the price of coal in Manchester, and at once proved a great commercial success. It was followed by other waterways, the effect of which was to give a new outlet for inland products and enable coal to be brought in bulk at remunerative rates to the manufacturing areas. Before the close of the century, hundreds of miles of canals had been completed.

Both roads and canals suffered from the competition of railways. The speed at which goods could be transported by rail involved a momentous cheapening of the

cost of distribution. Railways began in the industrial north, where bulky goods had to be transported. The opening of the Stockton and Darlington line (1825) at once reduced the price of coal in Darlington from 18*s.* to 8*s.* per ton. The great age of railway construction followed in the 'forties.

The economic effect of the introduction of railways was to lower the price of commodities, to speed up production, and to increase the element of competition. Small towns not served by the main routes and the countryside in general suffered, but the wealth of the country, as a whole, was considerably increased.

The application of steam to sea traffic was a somewhat earlier development. In 1824, the *General Steam Navigation Company* was instituted to capture the continental trade. Oceanic voyages by liners followed in the 'thirties; but it was not until the evolution of the *compound marine engine* driving an iron screw that the cargo steamer became economically profitable. Steel began to be used in shipbuilding for the hulls and general fittings about 1880; and twenty years later, the *turbine* was fitted.

The immediate economic results of the whole process which we call the Industrial Revolution are somewhat difficult to estimate. Production was manifestly stimulated, manufactured articles cheapened, employment, in general, increased, and town rents lowered, owing to quick transit. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether the distress of the period ought properly to be ascribed to the changes in industry. It is true that the new manufacturing methods involved the removal of the workers to the factory, and exposed them to the inevitable fluctuations of large-scale competitive industry. The

economic development was, however, distorted by the war, and much of the distress of the opening years of the nineteenth century must be attributed to this fact.

Ultimately, the effect of the Industrial Revolution was to make large-scale factory production the normal type in all industries. We have indeed seen that many of the new inventions helped, rather than hindered, the domestic worker; but sooner or later factories employing large-scale processes appeared in all parts of the country. The Revolution also profoundly modified the relative importance of industries. The cotton industry may be said to have been brought into existence by the mechanical inventions of the period. The iron, steel and hardware trades were immensely stimulated. On the other hand, the silk industry sank into relative insignificance.

The factory system involved the existence of an army of wage-earners. It also necessitated a reserve of labour, since trade tends to follow cycles of prosperity and depression. As compared with the domestic worker, the factory hand might normally be in receipt of a larger income; but his employment was precarious; and, having lost contact with the land, he had no longer any alternative, or supplementary, means of subsistence. The immediate consequences of his transference to the factory were undeniably disastrous; but the growth of a social conscience and of organisation among the workers soon remedied the worst evils. The long series of *Factory Acts*, commencing in 1802, afforded increasingly effective protection against the *sweating* of labour. The rise of trade unions, and of collective bargaining, corrected the isolation of the factory hand; and made it possible for him, in combination with his fellows, effectively to agitate for a "living wage" and for

restricted hours of work. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, wages rose 50 per cent. More recently efforts have been directed towards restoring to factory workers some of the healthful conditions of work in the country.

The Industrial Revolution created a movement of population towards the manufacturing areas of the North and Midlands. The results of this movement were both social and political. Socially, it involved the uprooting of thousands from the familiar surroundings of the countryside, broke up the organic life of the agricultural village, and substituted the *cash nexus* for the personal and intimate bond which had formerly united man with man. It stimulated the growth of great industrial cities, led to overcrowding in slum areas, and brought into existence acute problems of social welfare and public health. Politically, the movement of population accentuated the anomalies of representation, and gave rise to a strengthened demand for reform of the franchise. Rousseau had implied that a man's right to the franchise depended on his need of the vote as a protection. In England, distress drove the working classes to seek political power: and the extension of the sphere of Parliamentary action to protect the workers, as well as the Reform Act of 1832, may be regarded as, in some measure, the consequence of the Industrial Revolution.

The numerical increase in population, though partly attributable to the wars and to an ill-advised system of Poor Law administration,[1] was to some extent a con-

1 Under the so-called *Speenhamland Policy* (1795) the wages of agricultural labourers were to be supplemented from the poor rates. The consequence of this system was the universal lowering of farm wages.

sequence of the great increase in the nation's productive power. In ten years (1811–21) the population of England increased by no less than 20 per cent. Leeds doubled its population, 1764–90. In Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, the increase was even more prodigious. These changes had an important effect on economic theory. Overpopulation was thought to be a serious menace, especially in view of the growing dependence of England on imported food-supplies. Malthus suggested (1798) that the natural increase of population was much faster than any possible increase in the means of subsistence. In order to be able to purchase larger supplies of food, it was recognised that every effort would have to be made to increase British exports and capture fresh markets. With this end in view, it was imperative that the remaining mercantilist restrictions on free enterprise should be speedily abolished. The adoption of a *laissez-faire* policy in commerce and industry was the inevitable consequence of the new situation.

The Industrial Revolution brought immense wealth to England, and indirectly, through the increase in population, stimulated the reconstruction of the colonial empire of Great Britain. At the time of the outbreak of the French Revolution, England was a generation in advance of continental nations in the processes of manufacture; and this fact is of significance in explaining the British success in the long-sustained campaign against Napoleon. In internal communications, indeed, England lagged behind Holland and France, both of which countries possessed, at an early date, an admirable series of waterways and some excellent high roads. Internal unity, however, was more complete in England than on the Continent, where customs barriers impeded trade,

notably in France and several of the German states. Agricultural reconstruction in most continental countries was deferred until the nineteenth century. In many German states, the open-fields system was maintained until well on in the post-Napoleonic epoch.[1] In pre-revolutionary France, improved rotations of crops had been introduced here and there; but absenteeism on the part of the *seigneurs* and the poverty of the peasants had precluded rapid progress.

In industry, during the seventeenth century, France, the Netherlands and Italy, took the lead, and England was to a large extent a borrower of continental methods. The application of the steam engine to the problem of expelling water from coal mines was probably the first purely native invention of modern England. After 1760, however, the leadership of England in both agriculture and industry was unchallenged. Englishmen carried knowledge of the new methods of production to continental capitals and assisted in the introduction of manufacturing plant. The transformation of the textile industries of the Continent belongs to the period 1815 to 1840, though the spinning-jenny found its way into France and the Netherlands before 1789. The power loom came into use in those countries in the 'twenties of the nineteenth century. In Germany, the development was much slower, the steam loom being scarcely known prior to 1850.

In the metallurgical industries, French and German scientists had made notable discoveries, but practice was backward. The French coal industry grew after

1 There are still districts in France where peasant holdings consist of scattered strips, whilst the local communes have rights over the neighbouring wood and waste.

1840. In Prussia, so late as 1850, half the iron furnaces were still utilising charcoal as fuel. The engineering trades were undeveloped. Commerce followed mediæval channels, the great fairs maintaining their importance till the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution must accordingly be dated half a century or so later in the case of continental countries, as compared with the development in England.[1] It is only in recent years that England has lost the unquestioned manufacturing supremacy which was the result of this early industrial maturity. The economic and social effects of the Revolution were everywhere broadly the same. Increased production, accelerated transit, the cheapening of manufactured goods, the growth of city life, and economic discontent among the masses, were universal features. Growth of population after 1840 stimulated emigration; and, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, there began that westward movement across the Atlantic which has peopled the vacant areas of North America with the settlers of every European nationality.

In the history of western civilisation, the Industrial Revolution accordingly represents a most significant stage of human progress. It did not create, but it furnished much of the motive power of, the democratic movement of the nineteenth century. It contributed to the realisation of an organic national life. Railways, telegraphs, the telephone and the steam printing press made democracy almost inevitable. Local prejudices

1 The United States of America, though early developing transport facilities on a big scale, were, in 1850, some fifty years behind Europe in the application of mechanical inventions to industry.

tended to disappear. There was a general rise in the standard of living. Newspapers, pictures, chinaware, books, were no longer confined to the wealthy. At the same time, contrasts between rich and poor, capitalist and wage-earner became sharper. The Socialist movement of recent times was the outcome of the Industrial Revolution; and Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* (1867), proclaiming the gospel of class antagonism, was significant of the new temper of the proletariat. The *Age of Machinery*, however, has come to stay; and the mechanical inventions of the transitional period have at least afforded to the working man opportunities for rest and recreation.

CHAPTER XII

The "Ancien Régime" and the French Revolution

THE revolution which broke out in France in the year 1789 was not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a universal movement against authority and oppression, which may be traced back to the fifteenth-century Renaissance. Grievances were no worse in France than in many other parts of the Continent. In the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the revolutionary spirit was as restlessly active in Germany, Italy, Poland, and (in the political sphere) in America, as it was in France under Louis XV. We have traced in the departments of commerce, industry and colonial policy, the manifestation of the new spirit. In the social and political sphere, discontent and philosophic idealism were common to most European countries; and the rising in the Austrian Netherlands preceded the revolutionary outbreak in France.

There was thus universal opposition to the institutions, political and social, of the *ancien régime*. Revolution occurred first in France, partly because intellectual activity was there exceptionally intense, partly because the spirit of discontent and opposition was never properly restrained. It was the timidity and lack of foresight of the French Government which provoked the anarchy of 1789–95.

In order rightly to appreciate the Revolution, it is necessary to understand the real nature of the *ancien*

régime. Since the opening of the seventeenth century, in politics, literature and art, France had been the unquestioned leader of Europe. The establishment of monarchical despotism had been achieved by Henry IV, and perfected by Richelieu and Louis XIV. The centralised administration of France had been built upon the ruins of two rival systems—that of feudal jurisdiction and the self-governing institutions of the provinces. Political autonomy in the older group of provinces (the *pays d'élection*) had been extinguished in the early years of the seventeenth century. In the case of those provinces which had been more recently acquired, and which, in many cases, had been strong enough to make their own terms with the monarchy (the *pays d'état*), assemblies representative of the nobles, clergy and *bourgeoisie* of the province continued occasionally to meet: but, except in the case of the Estates of Languedoc and Brittany, had been gradually deprived of all power of independent action. Louis XIV had abolished the system of election of municipal officers; and established, at the head of each municipality, a mayor appointed by the crown. Feudalism as a political force had not survived the reconstruction under Henry IV. The king, with his bureaucratic machinery of *councils* and *intendants*, was thus left in undisputed supremacy.

Centralisation of authority was thus a characteristic feature of the *ancien régime* in France. It had practically extinguished local self-government; and it had crushed the political powers of the aristocracy. The intendants invaded at will the domain of municipal authority. The councils of state, though powerless against the monarchy, in practice legislated autocratically for the whole kingdom. The validity of laws depended nominally on

their registration by the High Court (*Parlement*) of Paris; but the Court could not constitutionally refuse registration, if demanded in person by the king. The *States-General* of France—the unwieldy body of representatives of the three mediæval estates of the realm, which Philip IV (1302) had first regularly convoked,[1] had not been summoned since the year 1614.

But, if the Government was arbitrary, it can hardly be considered oppressive. The bureaucracy, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, included a considerable proportion of upright and public-spirited officials. The Government devoted itself, systematically and with some success, to the development of trade and agriculture, the improvement in means of communication, and the betterment of the lot of the poorer classes. The age was one of enlightenment, and humanitarian sentiment was a conspicuous growth. In all the more advanced countries of Europe, the movement against slavery, persecution, cruel punishments and foul prisons attained significance in the last generation of the eighteenth century.

Unfortunately, the French Government, whilst abolishing the political powers of feudalism, had maintained the odious feudal privileges. Economically, France was a mass of privilege; and privilege brought in its train social inequality. The feeling that the nobles

1 The organisation of a representative assembly in France was thus very little later, in point of time, than the evolution under Edward I (1275–95) of a Parliament representative of the shires and towns as well as of the feudal classes. A fundamental distinction lay in the fact that, in France, there were no local representative institutions which could be linked up with the central machinery of Government. Moreover, so early as 1438–9, the States-General lost control of finance.

and clergy no longer performed the services to society which had been the original justification of these privileges, served to breed intense discontent. Moreover, the privilege of exemption from taxation,[1] enjoyed not only by all members of the first two orders but also by the official classes, imposed an intolerable burden on those least able to bear it. France was progressing markedly in wealth and economic prosperity, but most of the wealth was going into the pockets of those already privileged. The glaring contrast between luxury and poverty provoked the greater resentment in that the wealthy *bourgeois* and the care-free nobleman appeared indifferent to the sufferings of the peasants.

These conditions were reproduced in most continental countries. In some parts of Germany and Italy, the peasants were manifestly burdened with more onerous tasks and payments than was the case with the average French *roturier*. In Prussia, serfdom of a personal nature survived. Conditions were even more backward in Russia, where the three-fields system, personal serfdom and week work on the lord's land were maintained until 1861. Government, on the other hand, was, in many countries, truly beneficent and enlightened. The eighteenth century is "the age of the enlightened despot". Frederick the Great of Prussia (1740–86) and Joseph II of Austria (1765–90) were typical monarchs. Under Joseph's benevolent administration, the nobles were deprived of their immunity from taxation, the exclusive trading privileges of guilds and corporations were withdrawn, and the principle of religious toleration

1 This was absolute in the case of the formidable *taille* tax. For other taxes, the privileged orders were commonly allowed to assess themselves.

established. Nevertheless, the spread of rationalism was steadily undermining the basis of the old institutions of Europe. The very centralisation of authority assisted the reform movement, since it left the throne isolated. Similarly, in the domain of foreign affairs, the *ancien régime* invited destructive criticism. The naked self-interest of monarchs was revealed as the mainspring of the policy of most European countries. Territories were regarded as the personal estates of rulers, and distributed regardless of the wishes of populations, or the existence of national distinctions. The iniquitous partitions of Poland were an indication of the political and moral bankruptcy of the old order. In international politics, the eighteenth century was a period of conspicuously low ideals.

The *ancien régime* exercised a profound influence on the development of the Revolution in France. Apart from the fact that detestation of its features was the chief support of revolutionary ardour for at least a generation, the standpoint and sentiment of the people were the outcome of conditions as they existed under the monarchical system of the eighteenth century. De Tocqueville has shown that the centralised administration of France was an inheritance from the pre-revolutionary period; and that the Revolution, in many respects, notably in the destruction of feudalism, completed what the *ancien régime* had begun. Absence of respect for liberty may also be said to have sprung from conditions under the old order.

The outbreak of revolution is thus ultimately attributable to the whole development of modern history since the Renaissance. On the one hand, the monarchy had established an uncompromising absolutism by the

overthrow of those ancient institutions which might have been a powerful support to the throne in a time of revolutionary unrest. On the other, the aristocratic social system of the Middle Ages, involving the continuance of privilege and inequality, had never been superseded. These are the features of the old *régime* which led inevitably towards revolution—the entire exclusion of the people from share in the government of the country, the absence of any restraint on the arbitrary will of the executive, and the existence of a worn-out social system which gave rise to a maddening sense of inequality.

The immediate causes of the outbreak of the Revolution are somewhat more difficult to estimate. The financial chaos resulting from extravagant expenditure on wars and aggravated by ministerial incompetence, made necessary some drastic reconstruction of the political and taxative system of France. The American War added nearly 1200 million *livres* to the ordinary expenditure of the French Government. Only the wholesale cancellation of exemptions could avert bankruptcy after 1783. Six years later, the interest charge on the public debt amounted to no less than 236 million *livres*. Without fresh sources of taxation, the Government was helpless; and it was financial pressure which drove Louis XVI in January, 1789, to summon the States-General.

Had it not been, however, for the exasperation caused by the material grievances of the peasants, the States-General might have met and accomplished its work without any revolutionary upheaval. The French Revolution can never be understood without some appreciation of conditions in the country. Feudalism,

as an economic system, was maintained throughout the greater part of France. Serfdom (*mainmorte*), indeed, had largely, though not entirely, disappeared; but the peasant, even when nominal proprietor of his land, was still subject to a variety of obligations towards his *seigneur*. In many cases, the lord had entirely parted with his ancestral estates. He nevertheless retained his seigneurial rights and derived therefrom a considerable revenue. These rights varied widely from province to province, but some were of fairly general application. Such were:

(*a*) *Payments and services by way of rent*. The majority of the peasant proprietors were subject to perpetual rent-charges in money or kind; and also to various services. In a number of the provinces, *corvée*, or unpaid labour, was still an obligation generally enforced. Payments on the sale or alienation of land (*lods et ventes*) were also exacted. In origin these dues were reasonable, but the majority had come to be very serious obstacles to agricultural progress. Where the peasant had to submit to the lord's claim to appropriate for himself a share of the harvest (*champart*, or *terrage*) there was manifestly little encouragement towards improved methods of cultivation. Much greater loss was inflicted on the peasant than was represented by the lord's gain.

(*b*) *Seigneurial monopolies*. Such were the monopoly of the sale of wine (*banvin*), the grievous hunting rights, which, according to numerous *cahiers*,[1] were a cause of more destruction and loss to the farmer than all the other feudal rights put together; and the well-known

1 *Cahiers* were lists of grievances, and, at the same time, instructions, drawn up by all electoral assemblies for the ultimate guidance of the deputies of the States-General.

banalités of the mill, wine-press, and oven. In the Middle Ages, the fees payable for baking bread in the lord's oven, as in the case of the other *banalités*, had been a reasonable return for the employment of the lord's capital on construction of the bakehouse. In the eighteenth century, the obligation was rather vexatious than oppressive, though it gave opportunities for gross abuse. In some cases, peasants were compelled to pay *florinage* to be free from the seigneur's monopoly, even though no mill actually existed. In others, unreasonable delay in grinding the corn or baking the bread involved heavy losses.

(*c*) *Seigneurial jurisdiction.* This had been considerably encroached upon by the legal officers of the crown, but feudal courts still controlled nearly all cases arising out of feudal dues and obligations. The officers of these courts were appointed by the lord, and enjoyed no independence of tenure. Under such circumstances, the peasants were exposed to risks of gross favouritism and oppression.

In addition to these general obligations, there existed a mass of manorial rights prevailing in particular neighbourhoods. The evidence both of the *cahiers* and of observant travellers like Arthur Young, make it evident that conditions varied greatly in the different provinces. In some of the central provinces and in Brittany, the most outrageous obligations, derived from the period when serfdom was a personal condition, little removed from that of slavery, survived. Some of these had been commuted into money payments. Others might still be enforced; and it was these senseless privileges of the *seigneur* which did so much to exasperate popular feeling in the country.

In addition to the numerous class of peasant proprietors, there existed, in some of the better-cultivated provinces, labourers working for wages; and, in other parts, farmers on the *métayer* system. The former were reasonably well off; but the *métayers* were, for the most part, in a state of abject poverty. These men paid rent in kind, in return for the loan of stock and implements; and there is ample evidence that their life was one long round of anxiety and drudgery. It should be remembered that, with few exceptions, agricultural methods were still mediæval, that the excise on iron kept wooden implements in general use, and that only some eighteen bushels of wheat were normally produced from an acre. Whole districts, in consequence, lived in cortinual fear of famine. July was always a dangerous month, as corn supplied from the last harvest had by then frequently given out. In the critical year 1788–9, dread of starvation was a very real motive, driving men towards revolution. A tornado had worked great damage to the harvest of 1788; and the exceptionally severe winter aggravated the distress. Starving men flocked in desperation to Paris, in the hope of finding there a sufficiency of bread.

Nevertheless, the Revolution was not brought about by abject misery in the country districts. In some provinces, a considerable degree of prosperity obtained. Feudalism was not oppressive in Béarn and Languedoc. Most peasants consumed animal food in fair variety. In various parts of the country, peasants were buying land, though land was steadily rising in price. Serfdom had practically vanished. But the new-found prosperity, where it existed, only served to increase the mutinous spirit of the peasants, by making social inequality appear even more glaring.

Feudal dues and obligations, however numerous and vexatious, normally amounted to less, in money value, than the tithe charge, and to no more than one-half of the payments in taxation to the state. The crushing burden of taxation, as a result of the privileged position of the clergy and nobles, thus contributed materially to provoke revolutionary discontent.

The outbreak of the Revolution was hastened by the course of events in America, which increased the embarrassments of the Government, and gave point to the lessons of the philosophers. The French Government had assisted the Americans from a desire for revenge against Great Britain; but this policy was, in the long run, productive of consequences fatal to the continuance of absolute monarchy. Not only did the expenses of the war make impossible any measure of financial recovery, short of proposals which would have amounted to a revolution; but practical acquaintance with the system of democratic equality among the Americans converted French officers to the ideals of liberty and popular sovereignty. The fact that the Americans had won freedom and independence at the point of the sword, and with help from the French Government, was a powerful stimulus to revolutionary thought. Down to the middle of the eighteenth century, political philosophy had scarcely touched the fringe of French society. The works of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Diderot were little read, or regarded as purely theoretical. The Americans, on the other hand, not only proclaimed, but carried into effect, the principles of social equality and the supremacy of the popular will. From this point, the influence of philosophic thought must be considered as a force which did not create, but which precipitated, popular dis-

content. Rousseau gave the Revolution the watchwords so necessary for the stimulation of popular fervour. Without being original, he gave voice to feelings which had been stirring men's minds for more than a generation. His statements that only governments based on popular consent were legitimate, that the *general will* was always just, and that all constitutions which did not provide for the supremacy of the *general will* were usurpations, and should be suppressed—excited the ardour of the masses, and called into existence passionate hopes of social improvement. It was largely as a result of the teachings of Rousseau and his followers, that the word "revolution" came to be identified in popular estimation with the millennium.

Financial breakdown and the spur of hunger in the country districts were, probably, the most important single causes of the precipitation of the Revolution in the year 1789. The tension had been increased by the attempts of *seigneurs* in many parts of France to exact more rigorously dues and services which had fallen into desuetude; and by the determination of the greater part of the nobility, as revealed in the *cahiers* of that order, to resist abolition of privilege. The vacillation and incompetence of the Government encouraged the more extreme elements of discontent and opposition; and, with the coming together of the States-General in May, 1789, there began a steady drift towards anarchy and revolution.

The process may be very briefly summarised. The inherent difficulty of the situation led to mistakes on both sides. After centuries of autocratic rule, France needed a constitution; and the men who were called upon to frame it, though animated by a passionate

hatred of abuses and a patriotic desire to regenerate their country, were entirely without political experience. Wise statesmen like Mirabeau and Malouet worked for practical reforms, on the model of the British constitution. The leaders of the Assembly were, one and all, monarchists; and the *cahiers* had revealed the striking moderation of the demands of the people. Had the Government been competent and resolute, a salutary check might have been administered to the elements of disorder, and a democratic constitution realised without revolutionary excesses. But the strong government, which the country above all needed, was not forthcoming. Louis XVI, though well-intentioned, was constitutionally undecided. His advisers, for the most part, fell back on a fatal policy of inactivity and intrigue. It was the fear of losing the benefits of the Revolution which provoked excesses in Paris and the larger towns. The Queen was known to be intriguing with Austria, and the *emigrés* to be massing their forces on the eastern frontier of France. Later, the flight to Varennes, the menacing despatches from Vienna, the hazardous early campaigns against Austria and Prussia, and the publication of the *Brunswick Manifesto* brought home to the people of France the imminence of the danger of restoration of the *ancien régime*. Under such circumstances, power fell into the hands of men who condemned the hesitating policy of the ministers and were not afraid to attack the crown itself. Whereas there had been few, if any, republicans in the States-General of 1789, the later assemblies were dominated by theorists who denounced the continuance of the monarchy and incessantly demanded "fresh bouts of revolution". The presence of the invader on French soil, and the

outbreak of the *Vendéan* revolt produced the *Terror*; whilst the mistakes and intrigues of the Court, quite as much as the calculated policy of the revolutionaries, were responsible for the downfall of the monarchy. The instinctive fear of the people that the new *régime* was in danger of reversal, kept alive by such events as the treachery of Dumouriez, goes far to explain the massacres in Paris, and the continuance of disorders until 1795.

Over many districts, indeed, the Revolution was accomplished without bloodshed. Its achievements were the basis of the new social and political order that was to arise throughout Europe. The momentous changes of the revolutionary era, however, were only consummated after the close of the career of Napoleon. That career was essentially the continuation of the changes involved in the Revolution. The inevitable reaction following the Terror provided the opportunity for the rise to power of Napoleon, but it was as the heir of the Revolution that Napoleon elected to rule. The broad lines of his policy are to be discovered in the legislation of the revolutionary assemblies. In the later years of his imperial rule, indeed, he may be said to have departed from his early principles; and, particularly in his external policy, to have reproduced the aspirations and methods of the *ancien régime*. The essential achievements of the Revolution were nevertheless preserved, and extended beyond the frontiers of France, by Napoleon.

Napoleon's main services to Europe lay in the administrative sphere. He simplified and rendered more efficient the whole administrative system of states which came under his control; everywhere he reorganised the finances; he gave to Italy a semblance of national unity; and he liberated the peasants of Poland from serfdom.

The abolition of privilege and the accomplishment of a measure of political and social equality was the fundamental basis of the new order. The first step towards the abolition of the *feudal régime* was taken on August 4th, 1789. The dues and services which originated in serfdom were then abolished. The total destruction of feudal rights was accomplished in 1793. The taxative privileges of the nobles and clergy were swept away at an early date. The exclusive trading privileges of guilds followed. Equality before the law was substituted for tyranny and arbitrary caprice. By Louis XVIII's Charter of 1815, this was defined as equality in taxation, as regards justice and in public employment. Trial by jury was established, and negro slavery abolished. Imprisonment for debt came to an end under the Convention.

On the other hand, personal liberty was not safeguarded. The Revolution inherited from the *ancien régime* a certain indifference towards liberty, which, alike under the Terror and under Napoleon, was precarious. The centralised administration of France, under well-organised departments, was a natural development from the pre-revolutionary tradition of an efficient bureaucracy. To this day, democracy in France is qualified by autocratic officialdom, local self-government being impaired by the authority of the all-powerful *préfet*. Individual liberty is less assured than in Britain or America, owing to the existence of *droit administratif*.[1]

In the domain of private law the benefits of the Revolution are summed up in the *Napoleonic Codes*, the main

1 "Administrative Law"—rules regulating judicial procedure where the actions of servants of the state are in question. In British countries and in America, no sort of immunity exists for officials from the ordinary jurisdiction of the courts. See A. V. Dicey, *The Law of the Constitution*.

lines of which were drawn up under the Convention. A woman's claim on property held in common with her husband was protected. The way was prepared for the development, on a vast scale, of small ownership of land, by laws abolishing primogeniture and providing for the division of inheritances among sons. Divorce, under certain conditions, was legalised. The scientific consolidation of the law was in itself an immense gain. The great mass of laws and precedents, central and local, which had been characteristic of the *ancien régime*, had resulted in infinite confusion. In its place, the Napoleonic Codes gave France, and through France ultimately Europe, a uniform system of law.

We have seen that religious liberty in France was a product of the Revolution.[1] National education was another notable idea of the men of 1789. Condorcet is honourably distinguished for his advocacy of a national system of public schools. The Convention outlined a scheme of popular instruction under which each canton was to have its school. It is true that its decrees were largely nugatory; and that education was in fact neither gratuitous nor compulsory. But the conviction that popular enlightenment, based on universal instruction of the youth of the nation in public schools, was necessary to the existence of the new order, was to be the starting-point of the vast educational movement of the nineteenth century.

The science of political economy was transformed by the theory and practice of the French Revolution. Quesnay, Diderot and their followers inaugurated the scientific treatment of questions of national economy. Financial reform led the way. Public health, industrial

1 *Supra*, ch. VIII.

research, communications and public morality became the business of governments. The entire resources of the community were henceforth to be made available for the improvement of the general welfare of the people. The idea of privilege had been replaced by that of responsibility.

The Revolution was thus the birth of the new Commonwealth, much more than it was the downfall of the old *régime*. Its ideas were of universal application, and consequently, the new order was European and not merely French. The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848 completed, for the Continent as a whole, what had been begun in 1789, but slightly retarded in the period of reaction following the downfall of Napoleon. In England, the great Reform Act of 1832 was an indication of the progress of democracy. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the old privileged, authoritative, feudal society of western Europe had been replaced by a new organisation of the nations based on the principles of freedom and democratic equality.

CHAPTER XIII

Nationality and Democracy

IT is very difficult to define such terms as *nation* and *nationality*. A nation is not created by any legal enactment, and it is not possible to apply any infallible test by which nations can be distinguished from peoples who have not yet attained to nationhood. All that can be said is that a nation is a body of people who, as a result of concurrent forces, have come to possess a very strong sentiment of kinship and unity. This sentiment is normally in relation to some specific country. The implication is that a nation should also be a state; that people so linked together by common qualities and a common past cannot tolerate either national disunity or subjection to alien rule. The term *nationality* has been even more vaguely used. Properly speaking, nationality is the sum and substance of the differences between peoples which arise from race, language, religion and traditions. These are the things which determine a man's nationality. Language is perhaps the most tangible symbol of unity. We must also notice the fact that nationality is sometimes held to be the expression of a people's determination to achieve national union within an independent state. The so-called *principle of nationality* is the proposition that political divisions can only be justified in so far as they correspond with the geographical boundaries between nations. Down to the close of the eighteenth century, this was seldom more than approximately realised. The frontiers between states had advanced and

receded without reference to national distinctions, in conformity with the rise and fall of the dynastic fortunes of the ruling European houses. The era of national consolidation does not open till the nineteenth century. Nationality is thus a fairly recent force.

The principle that the nation should coincide with the state was clearly foreign to the Greek view of citizenship. In language, religion and common customs, the Greeks were deeply conscious of being one people, but they were far from desiring a single national state. Their political arrangements were founded on the principle that all rights were derived from membership of the city state; and it was only through the city state that Greek aspirations after complete democratic self-government could be fulfilled. The *good life* dear to the citizens of Athens and her democratic neighbours would have been unattainable under any national organisation of Greece.

The Roman Empire, on the other hand, furnished an example of a number of nations enjoying good government and prosperity under a single state.

Mediæval society was organised on a personal and tribal, rather than a territorial, basis. The important social bonds were those which connected individuals in local groups. A man was more keenly conscious of being a Gascon baron or a Swabian count than of being a Frenchman or a German. Moreover, the great institutions of the Middle Ages were international in character. The Holy Roman Empire and the Holy Catholic Church claimed the universal allegiance of Christian men. The sentiment of nationality, though present in embryo, was as yet weak.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, European states began to assume the form of national units. Political frontiers came to be precisely defined, and the

territorial principle triumphed over the tribal. From being kings of the French, the Capetian monarchs gradually came to be kings of France. The feeling that loyalty was owed primarily to the territorial state, above all extra-national or merely local obligations, was at the root of the new national spirit. In France, the Hundred Years' War significantly rallied national sentiment against the invader. In Germany, the same result at one time appeared likely to follow from the persistence of Mongol and Slavonic attacks.

The period of the Renaissance witnessed a degree of national consolidation in many states of western Europe, under strong monarchical governments. For three centuries or more, nationality expressed itself in highly centralised states, of which France under Louis XIV was the pattern. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the partitions of Poland brought into existence the modern principle of nationality. A nation which, for several centuries, had enjoyed separate existence as a state, had suffered political extinction, to satisfy the cupidity of neighbouring monarchs. The French Revolution further developed the principle. Hitherto, the state had been identified with the monarch. The Revolution organised the French nation independently of the king and government. The people were now free to give expression to their popular aspirations. Those aspirations, however, were only based on nationality in so far as the latter was implicit in the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people. The teachings of Rousseau and his followers had been cosmopolitan; and the spirit of France in 1793 was aggressive and propagandist. It was in the form of a national reaction against the Revolution and Napoleon that nationalism took root in Europe.

The history of the nineteenth century is largely concerned with the new emphasis which had come to be placed on nationalism. At first a new gospel of self-defence, nationalism gradually changed its character, becoming aggressive and an increasing menace to European peace. Mazzini taught that "nation is mission", and in so doing contemplated the enlistment of national sympathies on behalf of oppressed causes. Nationalism, as interpreted by Imperialist Germany, became the creed of an infatuated pride and spirit of self-assertion.

Nationality was disregarded in the settlement of 1815. Its authors had taken their stand on legitimacy and precedent. The two following generations witnessed the gradual reversal of arrangements made at Vienna. Consciousness of new strength, rather than material oppression, explains the early revolts—Greece against Turkey, Belgium against Holland, and Italy against Austria. In Poland, which had suffered the most grievous wrongs, the national movements ended in disastrous failure (1830–47). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, nationalism triumphed in Germany, Italy, and, to some extent, in the Balkan Peninsula. In all cases, the process was consummated by successful warfare. In fact, war was, in many cases, notably by Bismarck in 1870–1, deliberately engineered, in order to bring about national consolidation. Nationalism became manifestly exclusive—a force which tended to embitter relations between states, and so imperil the preservation of peace and order. The twentieth century witnessed no weakening of the influence which it exercised over the minds of statesmen and people. On the one hand, Norway achieved (1905) independence of Sweden: on the other,

nationalism in the Balkans was a chief factor in producing the situation out of which arose the Great War of 1914.

It is not only in the West that diplomacy and warfare have stimulated aggressive nationalism. In Africa, the overthrow (1896) of an Italian army in Abyssinia by black troops had many reactions. More recently, the significant defeat of Russia by Japan led to immediate repercussions in India and throughout the East.

It is indeed clear that nationalism is a fundamental sentiment of the human race; and that it has performed important functions for the state by increasing its internal cohesion. On the other hand, the future of the world depends on national antagonisms being softened rather than intensified; and mutual toleration is more likely to be engendered in commonwealths such as the United States of America, Canada, and South Africa, where various races have learnt to live together on terms of mutual respect under the same political institutions.

The nineteenth century is the great age of democratic progress. Greek democracy, as we have seen, involved the exercise of governmental powers by each individual citizen. This, however, can only be possible in states where the citizens have the leisure to devote to public affairs. The Greek view that all free-born should be equally participants in the work of government is clearly unrealisable in the modern, industrial, country state, where democracy is essentially the rule of the majority. The existence of an aristocratic element within a democracy, indeed, appears to be a fundamental necessity. Even at Athens, the whole body of citizens can scarcely be said to have determined the details of policy. Democracy, at the most, amounted to the right

of the masses to shape the ends of policy, and to criticise and punish for breach of duty, or unpopular use of power.

Modern democracy, however restricted its application may be in contrast with Greek practice, rests on very similar beliefs and principles. The view, which can be traced to Aristotle, that the collective judgment of the people is, on the whole, the most reliable guide is still the fundamental justification of democracy, from the point of view of the state. In relation to the citizen, democracy has again come to be considered as the condition without which there can be no complete self-realisation for the individual.

Representative democracy has its roots in the Middle Ages. The principle of the representation of local interests in a national assembly, which came gradually to exercise a decisive control over the actions of the executive, was the great contribution of the Anglo-Saxon race towards human progress. It was under her mediæval Angevin rulers that England first acquired the rudiments of her Parliamentary institutions and of the Common Law. In the Middle Ages, however, election and representation, in the modern form, were not inseparably connected with "Parliament", which was essentially a meeting of the King's Council. Under the Tudors, the House of Commons began, at the invitation, and to a large degree under the control, of the crown, to deal with high affairs of state. The great statutes of the Reformation period, revolutionising the fundamental law of the kingdom, were debated and passed by Parliament. By the close of the sixteenth century, the Lower House had elaborated its machinery of debate, and especially its committee system. The Tudors had

taught Parliament to legislate, and, in the constitutional struggle against the Stuarts, Parliament turned this experience to good account. The Commonwealth period in England taught Europe that governmental efficiency was possible under a democratic form of government, at a time when absolutism was dominant on the Continent. With the Revolution of 1688, the balance of power between King and Parliament was replaced by a system under which control of policy was effectively guaranteed to the elected House of Commons. But representative machinery was compatible, in practice, with the political domination of a landed aristocracy; and it was left to the nineteenth century to give to the people a real share in the government of European states. After 1815, there is a marked growth of liberal ideas; and the concession of constitutions designed to bring about a greater degree of popular control is a notable feature.

The democratic movement of the nineteenth century was inspired by the pressure of material grievances, rather than by the abstract doctrines of philosophers. In Great Britain, widespread discontent had resulted from the abandonment by the state of the function of commercial and industrial regulation. The difficulty of regulating industry which was expanding so rapidly; and recognition of the fact that individual enterprise had been largely responsible for the great development of the resources of the country, had led to the triumph of *laissez-faire*; but much misery and distress was caused among the working classes. In the opening decades of the nineteenth century, the demand that Parliament should interfere to safeguard the essential interests of the working man, gathered force. The Parliamentary

vote was regarded as a possible means of protection. It was argued that greater attention would be paid to the well-being of the masses only when the "man-in-the-street" had secured political enfranchisement.

The Reform Act of 1832 disappointed these anticipations. It was a first step towards a popular franchise, but it did not go very far. It brought to an end the rule of the landed aristocracy, but it enthroned in its place the well-to-do commercial class. It disfranchised fifty-six *rotten boroughs*, and swept away many anomalies of the franchise; but the aristocratic control of policy was scarcely impaired. The second Reform Act of 1867 introduced more radical changes. The town artisans were admitted to the franchise and sweeping changes made in Parliamentary representation. Gladstone's Act (1884) gave the vote to the rural labourers, adding some two and a half millions of voters to the register. It was followed by an Act which redistributed seats on the basis of equal electoral districts.

A parallel development can be traced in the sphere of local government. The Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, remodelled the government of municipalities, abolishing oligarchical control and establishing the principles of popular election of councillors and of independent audit of accounts. The elective principle was introduced into the government of counties, districts and parishes towards the close of the century (1888–94).

In colonial policy Great Britain led the way in the evolution of the system of *responsible government*, applied to Canada in 1846–7; and at somewhat later dates to the various colonies in Australia and South Africa.

The demand for constitutions embodying the prin-

ciple of the responsibility of ministers was strengthened on the Continent of Europe by the risings of 1830, and the expulsion of the Bourbons from France. Democratic progress, however, was far from being continuous. Liberalism had a chequered career in Germany. Several of the smaller states enjoyed, in the opening years of the post-Napoleonic era, a considerable measure of constitutional liberty; but Frederick William III's promise of a constitution for Prussia was never fulfilled. The larger states frankly preferred "efficient" to democratic government. This sentiment was strengthened by the events of 1848–9. Liberalism appeared to be allied to various idealistic and impracticable schemes, which were opposed to the continuance of order and strong government. The National Assembly at Frankfort, which had met under the stimulus of the news from Paris, wasted precious months on academic discussions on the rights of citizenship. Frederick William IV, after months of indecision, finally ranged himself with the enemies of the Assembly; and the cause of liberalism received a disastrous setback. In France, autocracy was established by Napoleon III, constitutional liberties being entirely suppressed. Hungary, which had seized the opportunity to raise the standard of nationality and liberalism, was reduced to submission by the armies of Austria and Russia.

In the realm of thought, the reaction against democracy began in the early years of the Revolution of 1789, with the publication of Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The doctrine of the natural rights of man, and of the invalidity of any society not based on their recognition, provoked a spirited defence of established custom and the aristocratic conception of the state. Moreover,

the theories of the natural-right school were historically unsound. Maine demonstrated the absurdities of the *social contract* theory, establishing the patriarchal origin of society in many parts of the world, for the earliest period illuminated by historical records. Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), whilst contributing to the development of free thought, introduced new considerations which were, on the whole, unfavourable to democratic theory. The law of the survival of the fittest was evidently in opposition to the democratic view of the equality of man and the desirability of *paternal* legislation. Later, the conservative trend in English political thought was represented by Stephen, who trenchantly criticised democracy on the point of efficiency.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, democracy was everywhere extended. The new kingdom of Italy and the Third Republic in France adopted the principle of responsible government. Parliamentary institutions were introduced into Spain in 1876. In Russia, the Duma, an elected assembly, enjoying the privilege of freedom of speech, dates from 1905. The progress of the Industrial Revolution contributed to forward the democratic movement. Ascendancy first passed from the landowners to the capitalists. Gradually, the centre of power tended to shift again from the moneyed class to that of organised labour. Education, in many states, became free and compulsory. The multiplication of books and newspapers led to an increasing measure of popular enlightenment. Industrial progress cheapened the cost of manufactured goods, and tended to improve the general level of comfort. The people came to be better clothed and better housed. Scientific inventions—the railway, the telegraph, the daily press,

forwarded democracy. Manhood suffrage was conceded in the more progressive states before the close of the nineteenth century. The twentieth witnessed the concession of the franchise to women,[1] Norway leading the way (1913); whilst in the United Kingdom, the Act of 1918 established the right of women (occupiers of property, or wives of such) over 30 to vote. The same Act virtually established manhood suffrage.

In recent years, there has been a movement towards *direct*, or *pure* democracy. The aim has been to increase the measure of popular control over governments. In these developments, America has, generally speaking, led the way. Dissatisfaction with the results of representative government, and particularly with the party system, has led to a decline in the repute of representative legislatures, and the adoption of expedients which mark a significant return to Greek ideals of direct democracy. Foremost among these expedients is the *referendum*, under which legislative proposals only become law after having been referred to, and accepted by, the electorate.

This system has been adopted in America, Switzerland and the Commonwealth of Australia. In several of the American states, it is a recognised part of the machinery of government. In Switzerland, its use as part of the machinery of the federal constitution dates from 1874. The decision to enter the *League of Nations* was taken by referendum after considerable popular discussion. Australia has used the method more sparingly;

1 The statement in the text refers to the Continent of Europe. In America, the state of Wyoming conceded the vote to women so early as 1869, though the constitution of the United States was not amended so as to permit of women voting in federal elections until 1920. Women obtained the vote in New Zealand in 1893.

but for constitutional amendments its employment is obligatory.

The democratic objection to the referendum is mainly that it does not go far enough—that it can impede, but not forward, legislation. The *initiative*, on the other hand, gives to the people the power of originating laws. In Switzerland, thirty thousand citizens may compel the submission of a measure to the popular vote. In some of the states of the great American republic, notably Oregon, the system has been very extensively employed. It is clear, however, that its frequent use is apt to lead to inconsistency in administration, and to a noticeable deterioration in popular judgment.

A third feature of extreme democracy, as developed in recent years, is the *recall* of legislators, officials, and even judges, as the result of a popular vote. This is a development peculiar to a few of the American states. State officials hold office subject to liability to removal at any moment at the instance of a certain number of citizens.

In some of the ultra-democratic communities of the present day popular control of officials has thus been carried to very great lengths. The actual participation of the citizens in the work of government, on the other hand, has only been found possible in very small communities. In four of the smaller *cantons* of Switzerland, public affairs are transacted in assemblies composed of all adult citizens. The matters discussed are not of purely local importance; for the cantons are self-governing units in a genuinely *federal*[1] state, and not merely areas

1 A federal state is one in which the functions of government are divided between a central and various non-central governments. The central, or federal, authority is not *sovereign*, but is limited by

of local government. In the larger cantons, the fact that nearly every matter of importance is determined by the referendum ensures a degree of popular control not far removed from the practice in the democratic city states of Greece.

Democracy has not altogether fulfilled the confident expectations of the nineteenth century. In the United States of America, where, as we have seen, democratic expedients have been very largely introduced, politics have not been thereby purified. The law-abiding spirit has, indeed, been conspicuously absent in some of the more democratic states of the west and south. Lord Bryce has remarked on the dominance of money as an evil from which modern democracies have not been immune.[1] Nor has international friendship been cultivated. The failure has been most pronounced in those respects in which ancient democracies achieved signal success. The stimulation of public spirit and the identification of the individual with the state were prominent features of the public life of Athens. Present-day democracies have so far failed to enlist the best capacity of each country in the public service.

The complete triumph of democracy in Europe did not come about till the conclusion of the Great War. Under the constitution of the German Empire (1871–1919), the activities of the German state were under the effective control of the King of Prussia. Responsibility of ministers to the representative legislature was unknown. In 1914 more than half the soil of Europe was

the necessity for observing non-central rights. In federal states, the constitution is commonly regarded as the sovereign authority, and a Supreme Court is established to safeguard its provisions.

1 *Modern Democracies* (2 vols.), an invaluable work of reference which the writer has freely used.

subject to autocratic rule. The War, however, made a clean sweep of absolutism and the divine right of monarchy. The new Germany is a federal republic in which the *Reichstag* exercises supreme legislative authority. The President selects the ministers, but the latter hold office only so long as they retain the confidence of the legislature. Democracy has also been accepted in the dominions of the late Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland and Scandinavia, the progress of democratic thought has been accompanied by a movement towards the substantial betterment of the economic and social condition of the masses. The provision of a system of *working-peoples' insurance*, the adoption of a *minimum wage*, and the introduction of *old-age pensions*, in which New Zealand led the way (1898), are indicative of the beneficent intentions of the democratic governments of the twentieth century. Now, representative democracy is on its trial. Since the conclusion of the Great War, western civilisation has been confronted by economic problems of the first magnitude. Only in Russia, however, where Parliamentary institutions have never been effectively introduced, has there been any violent overthrow of existing institutions. It is only under representative democracy, and with the whole-hearted co-operation of all citizens, that the task of reconstruction can be undertaken with confident grounds for success.

CHAPTER XIV

The Pacification of Europe

FROM the most primitive stages in human history down to the present day, instincts of repulsion have operated to produce strife between groups. War is one manifestation of this perpetual play of forces attracting or repelling mankind. An important aspect of history records man's efforts to reconcile the conflicting interests of communities and individuals without recourse to force. The organisation of internal order inevitably preceded any systematic attempt to regulate the relations between self-governing states. The early efforts of mankind were devoted towards the establishment of local security. In the earliest stage, government did not exist; and crime and wrongdoing were not considered to be of general interest. The notion of retaliation underlay primitive ideas of justice. The institution known as the *blood feud* assigned to the relatives of a murdered man the prosecution of a scheme of vengeance on the wrongdoer. Gradually, however, crime came to be regarded as an offence against society; and, in particular, as an affront to the king, or chief, who represented the unity and the dignity of the tribe. Violence and reprisal led to breach of the *king's peace*, and threatened danger to defenceless people. In consequence, the king's peace was extended to cover, not merely persons in special need of protection, but also localities where the preservation of order was of peculiar importance. A crime of violence on the king's highway was considered to be

more heinous than a brawl in a private house, though the injury involved might be the same. Then, with the evolution of the idea of the sworn allegiance of the subject or follower, consequent upon the growth of monarchical authority, the law of *treason* introduced a further category of offences which came necessarily under the cognisance of the public authorities.

It was not until late in the mediæval period that private justice was entirely superseded by public. Private *appeals*, followed by recourse to individual combats, were the rule in feudal Europe. *Trial by battle*, indeed, survived into the nineteenth century, though its importance ceased after the thirteenth. England, under the Angevin monarchs, led the way in the process of substituting national remedies for those which were purely local or feudal.[1] But the process was nowhere complete by the close of the Middle Ages. General confidence in the new national governments, the erection of which had been a feature of the transitional period, 1250 to 1494, had not yet been established. The principle of local independence remained strong. Town still negotiated with town on a self-governing basis; and the right of *reprisal* was practised by merchants for the recovery of debts well into the Reformation period.

As between organised communities, the problem of pacification was infinitely more formidable. We can, indeed, trace through history a more or less continuous effort after unity and pacific intercourse, but the recorded failures are tragically numerous, whilst complete success has hitherto proved unattainable. Development has

1 Under Henry II, landholders might decline judicial combat in defence of their rights; and, by procuring the writ *de pace habendo*, have the matter decided by a jury of neighbours.

been, significantly enough, on lines parallel to the process of organisation of internal security. Certain of the great waterways of the world have been taken under the special peace of some international authority. The erection of an *International Court*, in which universal confidence may gradually come to be placed, has engaged the attention of statesmen since 1899. Recently, self-governing areas, such as the city of Dantzig, have been entrusted to the supervisory authority of the *League of Nations*. The ultimate aim is the prevention of warfare between states.

The problem of inter-state relationship was of peculiar interest to the Greeks, who, whilst being conscious of a measure of racial and religious unity, were politically disintegrated into a large number of autonomous cities. Rules relating to the inviolability of heralds, the burial of the dead, and the treatment of prisoners of war, were formulated by representative *amphictyonies* and protected by religious sanctions. Arbitration was frequently employed in disputes between states, even for matters of vital importance to both parties—notably when Sparta arbitrated between Athens and Megara for the possession of Salamis.

Arbitration was less favoured by republican Rome, though Roman legal-mindedness operated to restrain precipitate recourse to war. Under the *jus fetiale*, the decision as to peace or war was taken by a college of priestly heralds. A period of thirty days was, in all cases, allowed before the declaration of war. Under the Empire, the establishment of the *pax romana* rendered unnecessary recourse to arbitration. The four centuries of imperial rule represent one of the longest periods of general peace in human history. At the same time,

Roman sense of equity found expression in the valuable collection of legal customs common to European peoples, which is known as the *jus gentium*.

The Holy Roman Empire of the mediæval period, to some extent, acted as an agent in the preservation of peace; but the influence of the Church was much more potent. The early Christians, notably Athanasius, had contemplated the speedy realisation of a Christian Commonwealth from which war would be altogether banished. The Christian method was one of moral suasion; and force was not considered justifiable, even in resistance to persecution. But the mediæval period witnessed the domination of military instincts. The feudal baron lived for warfare. Unceasing conflict between peoples, cities, and vassals and their lords, wrought material devastation, and endangered the very existence of the Church as a spiritual society. In the dark age of the ninth and tenth centuries, war became the occupation of bishops scarcely less than of kings and lay barons. The Church was powerless to restrain the turbulence of feudal society.

In the early years of the eleventh century, however, there began, in the south of France, a movement, initiated by the Church, to limit the disastrous consequences of private warfare. The *Truce of God* was an inestimable benefit to the non-feudal and non-military classes. Under its regulations,[1] women and the regular clergy were to be regarded as under the special protection of the Church: private quarrels were not to be pursued between certain hours including the Holy Day: whilst, at certain periods of the year, notably Lent and

1 The regulations were not the same for all parts of Europe, nor was the system universally applied.

Advent, hostilities were prohibited for the whole of the latter part of the week. The efforts of the Church were powerfully assisted by the lay monarchs, who strove to suppress private warfare, and to reduce feudal independence to the narrowest limits. The Crusades, however, revived military ardour; and, in the thirteenth century, the Papacy authorised the employment of military violence to overthrow the *Albigensian* heresy. War was thus made the arbiter in religious disputes between Christian peoples. The fourteenth century witnessed the cessation of the Crusades, but also the commencement of the harrowing Hundred Years' War between England and France. Papal arbitration was now powerless to heal national disputes, for, with the commencement of the papal residence at Avignon, the universal character of the Holy See appeared to have been cast aside. The decline in the prestige of the Papacy involved a corresponding weakening of the ideal of Christian unity; and, with the rise of the self-conscious national state, the problem of peace became infinitely more complicated.

Erasmus, in his *Complaint of Peace* (1517), stigmatised wars as the outcome of the ignoble ambitions of kings. Wars, he pronounced, were "carried on with infinite detriment to the people: while in most instances, the people had not the smallest concern either in their origin or their issue". There are indications of a definite project to secure the attendance, at the Congress of Cambrai, held in that year, of the principal European sovereigns, with a view to the establishment of an indissoluble league for the preservation of peace. Nothing came of this design, and it was not until a century later that the matter engaged the serious attention of statesmen and philo-

sophers. Grotius, working on foundations supplied by Ayala and Gentilis, endeavoured to create a systematised international jurisprudence. Having demonstrated the instability of peace based on any projected equilibrium of power, he boldly appealed in his *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (1625) to natural equity as the guiding principle in international relations. The establishment of an assembly empowered to mediate in quarrels between states he considered to be a necessity.

The *Grand Design*, attributed to Henry IV of France by the editor of Sully's *Memoirs*, was an indication of the depth of the impression left on the minds of thoughtful men by the miseries of political and theological strife. The project was one of a number of academic schemes intended to limit the sufferings involved in warfare. Disputes were to be settled by a general council representative of the component nations of a great Christian commonwealth. But the reorganisation of Europe was to be deferred until the accomplishment of various military schemes directed against the Catholic Powers of Europe; and the project, if it was ever sincerely mooted, was of little practical significance.

Wars of religion gradually died away after the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia (1648). The wars of dynastic ambition and commercial antagonism, which followed, were, however, no less bitter; and the suffering entailed gave a further impetus to constructive thought. Penn's *Essay towards the Peace of Europe* suggested the application to international affairs of the principle of federation, of which he found an example in the constitution of the United Netherlands. The Abbé de St Pierre, in his *Projet de la Paix Perpétuelle* (1713), elaborated the earlier proposals for a league of sovereigns,

suggesting that, in case of default, the other members of the league should unite to apply coercion.

The assembling of congresses to deliberate on affairs of common interest was a hopeful feature of the early years of the eighteenth century; but the jealousies of ruling monarchs made impossible any degree of sincere co-operation. The dominating ideas of the *ancien régime*, particularly the conception of the state as the personal property of its monarch, were the fundamental obstacle to the pacification of Europe. So long as these conditions obtained, such devices as the organisation of alliances so as to produce a *balance of power* were patently futile. The French Revolution prepared the way for the new order by abolishing the autocratic monarchy in France. The replacement of autocracy by democracy made feasible some international union to maintain peace. Such, at any rate, was the argument of Immanuel Kant's *Towards Perpetual Peace*: but, unhappily, enthusiasm for the cause of liberty throughout Europe, and the fascination exercised over Frenchmen by the ancient ambition to attain the *natural frontier* of the Rhine and the Alps, made the revolutionary spirit aggressive and unconciliatory. There was little hope of permanent peace under Napoleon; and it was not until the assembling of the Congress at Vienna (1814) that the ideal of the organisation of Europe for the maintenance of peace could be pursued with any prospect of success.

To the statesmen assembled at Vienna, war appeared to be the outcome of the revolutionary spirit, and the maintenance of the principle of legitimacy the best means of ensuring peace. Alexander I of Russia was the projector of the *Holy Alliance*, under which the sovereigns of Russia, Austria and Prussia were to be "united by the

bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity"; and were to base the policy and administration of their states on the "precepts of justice, Christian charity and peace". The practical work of reorganising Europe on the basis of the Vienna treaty was left to the Quadruple Alliance, in which Great Britain participated. Specific agreements defined the aims of the Alliance and the duties of contracting members. Conferences were summoned at regular intervals; and, for the best part of a generation, the Alliance remained an important factor in the maintenance of a European concert.

Gradually, the reactionary influence of Metternich predominated. The chief aim of the Alliance came by slow degrees to be the preservation of the established political order in all states, and the repression of liberalism. The common will, which alone could vitalise the deliberations of such a body, soon ceased to exist. Great Britain withdrew, rather than countenance the effort to re-establish the old *régime* in Spain and Spanish America, the outcome of Canning's action and of the simultaneous threat of Russia to the Pacific Coast of North America being an Anglo-American *rapprochement*, and the formulation (1823) of the *Monroe Doctrine*. The New World was made safe for democracy, and, to some extent, protected from the danger of militarist infection. Application, from time to time, of the Monroe Doctrine ensured the settlement of disputes between European Powers and the states of Central and South America by arbitration rather than by military force. At the same time, the cause of legitimacy and reaction in the Old World was weakened by the success of liberalism in the New. France withdrew from the Alliance (which she had been allowed to enter in 1818) as a result of the

Revolution of 1830; and, though autocracy triumphed over the forces of disorder in the 1848 risings, the repression of reform could not be permanently accomplished.

Meanwhile, the method of arbitration had come to be more generally favoured. In 1814, the Anglo-American difference on the interpretation of Clause I of the Peace of Ghent was solved by reference of the point at issue to Czar Alexander I. Later in the century, general treaties between Powers provided for the reference to arbitration of all existing or subsequent disputes relating to specified subjects. The settlement (1872) by arbitration at Geneva, of the famous *Alabama Case*, involving matters of vital interest to Great Britain and the United States, was a significant triumph for the principle of peaceful settlement of national disputes.

The period extending from the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853) to the Treaty of Frankfurt (1871) was a time of unsettlement and of deliberate preparation for war. The struggle for political supremacy and the pressure of growing populations were factors in the situation which diplomatists of the preceding generation had been inclined to ignore. Bismarck impressed upon Europe the fact that treaties might be powerless to restrain great states in the pursuit of what they held to be vital national interests. Five wars occupied this period, the outcome of which was the establishment of national unity in Germany and Italy. In the forty-three years of comparative peace which followed, the hopes of humanity that war had become a thing of the past appeared to be based on weighty considerations. The unity and economic solidarity of Europe had been manifestly developed. At the same time, the urgent problem of

poverty in all countries had begun to engage the earnest attention of statesmen. The franchise had been extended in a democratic direction; and the labour movement had attained a measure of organisation and political power. All these tendencies made for peace and international co-operation. War, it was clear, would throw back progress and imperil the very basis of European civilisation. Again, in many countries, the principle of nationality had now been, to a considerable extent, realised. There appeared to be good grounds for the hope that the future aspirations of nations would take account of the national rights of others. At the same time, a school of economists proclaimed that the economic interdependence of all states would render war well-nigh impossible.

Cobden was the leader of a group of Free Trade thinkers who held that, as a result of the development of a world system of exchange, wars could no longer be made profitable. The removal of artificial barriers to trade would lead to the establishment of a world division of labour; and the interdependence of the world's markets, which Cobden saw approaching, would be a great step towards the realisation of peace. "Free Trade", he declared, "is the best peace maker." In more recent times, the mechanism of international exchange has grown ever more complicated and highly organised. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the world was rapidly becoming a single economic society, with a single system of credit. A significant revival of Cobdenism followed, receiving a new impulse from the publication (1909) of *The Great Illusion*. Its author, Mr Norman Angell, based his arguments mainly on the interdependence of the banks and stock exchanges

of civilised states. International credit, he declared, was so delicately balanced that the mere rumour of war would produce profound financial disturbances. No nation could make war profitable; and realisation of the fact that a declaration of hostilities would entail certain financial ruin would soon cause men to discard war altogether.

The events of 1911–18 established the futility of hopes based upon such calculations. It became evident that nationality was still a force which tended to embitter the relations between states. The Balkan Peninsula was the cause of profound disquiet; and it was in the Balkans that the great conflagration of 1914 had its origin. The economic interdependence of states, though it made the war more costly, was powerless to bring hostilities to the speedy conclusion contemplated by Mr Angell. It was seen that the adaptability of twentieth-century industry was a powerful assistance to belligerent states in organising for war. Progress in organising efficiency and technical skill had indeed multiplied the resources of states for military purposes. But, if war was still possible, it had become incalculably more disastrous.

At the same time, the great risk of modern warfare appears to be the entire disappearance of the mobile elements, and the substitution of static warfare with prolonged deadlocks and little prospect of decision. This feature is as prominent in naval as in military warfare. Perhaps realisation of the indecisiveness of warfare will do more than anything else to convince the world of the futility of appeals to arms.[1]

Prolonged periods of peace have generally followed the conclusion of great wars; but the permanent pacifi-

1 See J. H. Rose, *The Indecisiveness of Modern War* (1927).

cation of Europe was seen to require the erection of international machinery for the settlement of disputes between states. A hopeful feature had been the establishment in 1899 of the *Hague Conference*, on the initiative of the Czar of Russia. This Conference, which was attended by the representatives of twenty-six Powers, failed indeed to agree on the reduction of armaments, but it provided permanent machinery for the pacific adjustment of disputes. The new organisation included an administrative council and a Court of Arbitration, the personnel of which was subject to almost infinite variation. The arbitrators were essentially representatives of their respective governments; whilst decisions tended to be of the nature of compromises, rather than interpretations of International Law. The Hague Conference of 1907 endeavoured to remedy these defects, but the Powers could not agree upon the composition of the Court. Nor were they ready to accept the principle of compulsory arbitration, except in the case of *justiciable* disputes, where neither the honour nor the vital interests of the parties concerned were involved. A tribunal, the jurisdiction of which was limited to the settlement of differences of this nature, would be manifestly powerless to avert European warfare; and the difficulty is to make International Law binding in precisely those cases in which individual states desire to preserve their liberty of action.

The attempt to enforce pacific modes of settlement in every kind of dispute between states was first made in connection with the establishment of the Central American Court of Justice (1907); but the rejection in some cases of the Court's awards, emphasised the need for some sanction more powerful than that of public

opinion. The establishment of an association, or league, of nations was an indispensable condition of success, and, with the conclusion of the Great War, attention was concentrated on the problem of discovering the most suitable expression which could be given to the general aspiration for an international association of states. A preliminary draft was issued by a commission of the Peace Conference in February, 1919; and the *Covenant of the League of Nations* was finally signed on June 28th, 1919.

Under the Covenant, members of the League guarantee each others' territory and existing independence against external attack. No member may go to war until three months after the award of the League; and, if hostilities are commenced in violation of the Covenant, all the other members are bound to break off intercourse with the offending state, and to co-operate in economic measures against it.

On the other hand, the Permanent Court of International Justice, established in 1920, and accepted, with some reservations, by the United States in 1926, has no power to summon disputants before it. Arbitration has not been made compulsory; and the Court may only pronounce on matters voluntarily submitted to it. Moreover, the Assembly and Council of the League give recommendations, rather than commands, and all decisions require unanimous consent. No international body exists with power to legislate or to issue executive orders. The League of Nations, in other words, is an organisation to promote international agreement and co-operation. It is based on the principle of national sovereignty. Nations retain their freedom of action, including the possibility of resort to arms, "for the main-

tenance of right and justice"; and they may withdraw altogether from the League on giving two years' notice.

It remains to be seen whether an organisation with merely persuasive authority will prove effective in the maintenance of European peace. The Covenant has been criticised for respecting too faithfully the sovereignty of individual states; and, in particular, for not making arbitration compulsory. Much valuable work has already been performed: but, in particular instances, notably in the administration of the territory of Dantzig, it has been found that the authority of the League does not suffice in itself to ensure the carrying into effect of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. It may be found necessary to give to the League the power of decreeing an economic boycott of offending states, and even of employing military force. The effectiveness of the former method would depend on the general consent of members to be bound by the decisions of the arbitrating authority. The question is thus whether the moral appeal to the national conscience is strong enough to override the special interests of peoples. Success will depend on the spirit with which the machinery of the League is worked. The mere assembling together of the statesmen and diplomatists of the world cannot achieve permanent peace, without the resolute will of the peoples of all countries to extend to the sphere of international relations the obligations of common morality. The problem is as much ethical as it is constitutional. The present generation is confronted with the ruin of that civilisation which has been the product of the growth of centuries, unless means can be devised for effectively restraining warlike impulses. And yet, there is much ground for

confidence as to the future.[1] The will to dominate has been overcome by the British people in the government of a world empire, which has come to be a free commonwealth of nations. The maintenance of peace along the undefended frontier of Canada and the United States is another significant achievement of the past century. At the present day, both self-interest and social idealism combine to support the principle of national forbearance and self-restraint, as the basis of the permanent pacification of Europe.

1 The successful issue of the Disarmament Conference, 1921–2, at which Great Britain may be said to have voluntarily surrendered naval supremacy in the interests of general pacification, whilst agreement was reached on thorny problems relating to the Pacific, was a significant step towards the peace of the world. The fact that the Great Powers have now, largely owing to the pressure exerted by debates in the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations, recognised Albania as an independent state, is indicative of the moral influence exercised by the League.

NOTE
on the *History of the United States*

Though the course of American history has run, in large degree, apart from the main stream of European progress, the great work of the United States for the western world calls for more than incidental mention. In the realm of ideas, the United States, as the first successful federal republic on a grand scale, exerted, from an early date, an influence on the nations of Europe. The significant landmarks in American history are, nevertheless, economic, rather than political. The chief interest attaches to the gradual development of population, capital, and organisation to permit of full utilisation of the enormous natural resources of the country. The construction of railways brought into existence vast producing areas in west and south, and alone made possible economic unity. The introduction of agricultural machinery in the 'sixties enabled the western farmlands to meet the growing needs of the European market, consequent upon the increase in population and decline of agriculture in the countries of western Europe. In the ensuing generation, under the stimulus of vast industrial growth, population doubled whilst the wage rate increased nearly fivefold.[1]

Political and social conditions, on the other hand, have revealed remarkable stability. Conservatism has been as pronounced a feature as the power to assimilate divers European nationalities.

The contribution of America towards the progress of western civilisation must be sought largely in the realm

1 *Cambridge Modern History*, VII, p. 706.

of applied science; but the political and religious ideals of Americans have, from time to time, exerted a profound influence on European thought and practice. And in the endowment of education, America may be said to have led the way.

The twentieth century brought the United States into immediate contact, and to some extent into rivalry, with the older powers of Europe. Though the policy of comparative isolation still rallies powerful support, it may be said that the great republic now exerts a constant influence on European affairs, and has accepted, in large degree, the responsibilities which attach to membership of the European community of nations.

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COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
B.C.	B.C.	B.C.	
		4241. Calendar invented in Egypt.	
c. 3700. Bronze age begins in Crete.		3100. Great Pyramids of Gizeh.	
c. 2400. Bronze age opens in Egypt.	*c.* 2100. Abraham.		
c. 2000. Commencement of copper culture in W. Europe.			
	c. 1230. The Exodus.		
	c. 1200. Trojan War.		
c. 1100. Iron age begins in Greece. End of bronze civilisation.	*c.* 1100. Dorian invasion of Greece.		
c. 1000. Early iron age in Central Europe.		1000–800. Homeric poems.	
	c. 970. Solomon.		
	c. 753. Rome founded.		
c. 600. Iron-using Celtic peoples reach Britain.	*c.* 509. Roman republic founded.		

COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS (*continued*)

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
	B.C. 490–479. Crisis of Persian invasions of Greece. 461–431. Age of Pericles. 404. Fall of Athens. 336–323. Reign of Alexander the Great. 31–A.D. 14. Reign of Augustus and foundation of Roman Empire. A.D. 4. Birth of Christ.	B.C. 480–420. Great age of artistic genius at Athens. 447. Parthenon begun. 384–322. Aristotle, "the Father of Learning". *c.* 140. Hipparchus determines the length of the solar year.	

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
	284. Diocletian begins his reform of the Empire. 313. Edict of Milan. 451. Battle of Châlons. Anglo-Saxons invade Britain. 476. End of Empire in West. 529. *Rule* of St Benedict. 622. *Hegira* of Muhammad. 732. Battle of Tours saves Christendom in the West. 800. Coronation of Charlemagne.		A.D. 795. First recorded discovery of Iceland.

COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS (*continued*)

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.	A.D.
	962. Holy Roman Empire of Otto I founded.		982. Discovery of Greenland.
	1066. Norman Conquest of England.	1000–1100. Great age of Romanesque building in W. Europe.	1000. Discovery of *Vinland* by Scandinavians.
	1073–1085. Pope Gregory VII.		
	1095. Beginning of Crusades.	*c.* 1150. Age of Gothic architecture begins.	
1171. Public Debt of Venice.			*c.* 1180. Reference to use of magnetic needle in navigation.
	1215. Magna Charta.		
1240–1. Setback in East Europe from Mongols.			1245. Carpini traverses Central Asia almost to China.
			1253–55. Rubrouck finds the Caspian to be an inland sea.
			1260–70. The Polos journey to the Far East.

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
		1268. R. Bacon's *Opus Maius* anticipates modern natural science.	
			1291. First attempt to find a sea-route to India round Africa.
	1295. Model Parliament of Edward I.		
	1309–77. Pope resides at Avignon.		
		1321. Death of Dante.	
		1328. Birth of Chaucer.	
	c. 1330. Gunpowder invented.		
		1334. Death of Giotto.	
1348–9. The Black Death.			
			1375. *Catalan Atlas* shows Asia with some accuracy.
	1378–1417. Great Schism.		
	c. 1380. Wycliffe's Bible in English.		
			1431. Portuguese colonise the Azores.
			1444. They round Cape Verde.
		c. 1450. Invention of Printing.	

COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS (*continued*)

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.	A.D.
	1453. Fall of Constantinople.	*c.* 1453. Great age of classical renaissance in Italy begins.	1486. Diaz rounds the Cape.
	1494. French invasion of Italy.		1492. Columbus discovers America.
		1506. New cathedral of St Peter, designed by Bramante, begun.	1498. Da Gama reaches India.
	1517. Luther's *Theses.*		
		1519. Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin.*	1519–22. Magellan's voyage round the world.
	1530. Lutheran Confession of Augsburg.	1536. Calvin's *Institutes.*	
		1543. Copernicus's *On the Revolutions of Celestial Orbits.*	
	1545–63. Council of Trent.		1569. Mercator's new projection.
		1583. Galileo's discovery of principle of the pendulum.	
	1588. The Spanish Armada.	1591. Shakespeare's first play.	

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
	1598. Edict of Nantes.	1605. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning.*	
1618–48. Thirty Years' War retards development of Germany.		1609. Galileo learns that the sun revolves on its axis in about 28 days.	
		1621. Inigo Jones designs Whitehall in renaissance style.	
		1625. Grotius's *De Jure Belli ac Pacis.*	
	1636. R. Williams established complete religious liberty in Rhode Island.		1642. Tasman discovers Tasmania and New Zealand.
		1662. Royal Society founded.	
		1666. Newton discovers gravitation.	1683. Dampier's voyage.

COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS (*continued*)

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.	A.D.
	1688–89. Revolution in England; Toleration Act; Locke's *Letter*.	1687. Newton's *Principia*.	
1705. Newcomen at work on the steam engine.			1731. Invention of quadrant.
			1740. Anson's sail round world.
1765. Watt's steam engine.		1762. Rousseau's *Social Contract*.	
1770. Cartwright's power loom.		1774. Priestley discovers oxygen.	
1779. First iron bridge (Severn).	1776. American Declaration of Independence.		
	1787. American constitution framed.		
	1789. French Revolution; Declaration of Rights of Man.	1793. French Assembly decrees free compulsory primary education.	

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
	1804. Code Napoléon.		
1807. Coal gas adopted for street lighting in London.	1814–15. Congress of Vienna.		
1825. First railway opened in Britain.	1832. Great Reform Act.		
1833. Electric telegraph built.	1833. Slavery abolished by Britain.		
	1839. Lord Durham's Report.		
	1847. The *Communist Manifesto.*		
	1848. The Year of Revolution.		
			1856. Discovery of Great Lakes of Africa.
		1859. Darwin's *Origin of Species.*	
	1861–5. American Civil War.		
1866. Atlantic cable laid.			
		1867. Discovery of *Hertzian* waves the starting-point of wireless telegraphy.	

COMPARATIVE CHART OF WESTERN PROGRESS (*continued*)

Material Progress	*Politics and Religion*	*Art and Thought*	*Geographical Discovery*
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.	A.D.
			1869. Suez canal opened.
	1871. German Empire founded.	1870. Education Act in Britain.	
1876. Bell's telephone.			
1896. Langley's flying-machine flies ½ mile.		1895. Rontgen discovers X-rays.	
		1898. Discovery of radium.	
	1899. 1st Hague Peace Conference.		1909. Peary reaches North Pole.
			1911. Amundsen reaches South Pole.
	1914–18. Great War.		1914. Panama Canal opened.
1919. First transatlantic flight.	1919. Treaty of Versailles.		
	1920. 1st Meeting of League of Nations.		
	1925. Treaty of Locarno.		

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